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# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

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ARCHIVES IN CALIFORNIA

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# Milestones in California History—

## The Society of California Archivists: The First Twenty-Five Years

The Society of California Archivists (SCA) was founded in 1971, about the same time that other regional archival associations were organizing in the United States. The post-World War II expansion in California created many new and diverse institutions that started archival programs. Managed entirely by volunteers, SCA provided a forum for the archivists responsible for these programs to discuss common problems related to all aspects of archival administration. It would also give support to those archivists who collect, care for, and provide access to the documentary heritage of California and adjoining areas.

The meetings and workshops of SCA have always been organized to offer both communication and education for its membership. The Annual General Meeting (AGM), alternating north and south, has been central to this effort, stressing particular themes such as computer access to archives, archival security, or preservation. The two-day basic archives workshop conducted throughout California was soon added to the AGM's schedule. This was SCA's first effort in the area of archival education and recognized the society's interest in encouraging students. It was furthered by the establishment in 1985 of a scholarship to support attendance at the basic workshop and AGM.

Through the years, SCA has offered special one-day workshops twice each year. These programs also emphasize solutions to special archival problems and are offered in both the northern and southern parts of the state. Networking with related organizations has been one of SCA's hallmarks, and many of the workshops have been co-sponsored with other archival organizations, as well as historical societies and the regional oral history association.

SCA's major accomplishment in the field of archival education was the establishment of the Western Archives Institute, co-sponsored by the California State Archives. This annual, two-week course covering basic archives topics has been taught by faculties of national prominence and has attracted students from as far away as Japan. The scholarship program has been expanded to include another scholarship awarded annually to a student accepted into the institute. As this program reaches its tenth year, plans are underway for the establishment of an advanced archival institute that will concentrate on selected special topics for practicing professional archivists.

The society has published a quarterly newsletter since 1972 that is now significantly expanded from its original format. Its first major publication was *The California Archival Repository Directory*, now in its fourth edition. "Westwords," a series of occasional papers, is now published by SCA to encourage discussion of significant issues of current interest to members of the archival, manuscript, and library communities.

SCA has always championed issues of importance to the



The Western Archives Institute, an annual, two-week institute co-sponsored by the Society of California Archivists and the California State Archives, met first in July 1987 on the campus of UCLA. Since that first institute, shown here, participants have continued to study the changing issues and technologies of records management. Courtesy California State Archives.

archival community, has promoted public interest in historical records, and has taken stands against measures or laws that would compromise the integrity of records or the freedom of access to their use. When a wave of archival theft swept the nation in the mid-1970s, the society's archival security committee sponsored a strong law against archival and library theft, which was enacted by the state legislature in 1978.

The work of SCA has been accomplished through its officers and committee members, who over the years have been a dedicated group of professionals volunteering their time and expertise to the growth and development of the society and its membership, which in August 1995 numbered 424. There have been two special committees: Committee of the Eighties and Committee 2000, whose study and recommendations have materially assisted the society in moving toward the twenty-first century. An endowment for special education projects has been established, and SCA is now incorporated with an executive director. But one thing that has remained constant throughout SCA's history is a friendly spirit that encourages and welcomes new members, especially students.

JAMES V. MINK  
First President, Society of California  
Archivists (retired)

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FRONT COVER: *Lizard with Arrows*, ca. 1931, untitled watercolor drawing by a young American Indian student at the Warm Springs (Oregon) Reservation School. Held by the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, San Bruno, Calif., this artwork was created as one representation of western American Indian art design, requested in 1931 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Sacramento. Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region. BACK COVER: California Fruit Growers and Farmers Convention brochure, 1929. Courtesy California State Archives, ephemera collection.



# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

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## CALIFORNIA ARCHIVES

### An Introduction

by Waverly B. Lowell and Teena Stern, Consulting Editors

This special issue of *California History* dedicated to archives was initiated as a way to commemorate twenty-five years of service to the historical community and general public provided by the Society of California Archivists, the organization that represents the professionals who operate and manage the state's varied archival institutions. Records, personal papers, and oral histories are the raw materials from which we construct an understanding of the world we came from, an analysis of the place we live, and a plan for the global village of the future. In California we are lucky to have thousands of collections of original documents that provide insight into the state's cultural and social diversity, government and politics, economic development, and natural resources.

Archivists are the professionals who locate, collect, organize, preserve, and make these materials available to the family historians, scholars, artists, historic preservationists, environmentalists, government leaders, and general public who need them. They work in colleges and universities, government archives, historical societies, libraries, corporate archives, museums, special subject collections, and myriad other repositories that contain California's documentary heritage.

The word *archives* refers both to the places that maintain collections of historical materials and to the materials themselves. Archives include *manuscripts* such as personal papers created by or relating to individuals, including letters, diaries, household accounts, family photographs, and marriage licenses; and *records* created and maintained by municipal, state, and federal agencies, corporations, institutions, and organizations, including such items

as reports, vital statistics, correspondence, and case files. Archives encompass every format that contains significant historical information, such as paper, film, magnetic tape, and laser disks, and the different media used to record this information, such as handwritten or typed documents, architectural, engineering and cartographic drawings, photographs, films, videos, sound recordings, and electronic media. "What makes the records 'archives' is neither age nor appearance, but rather content, meaning, and usefulness."

Lewis Mumford has written that "it is in the study of our local history, the artifacts and buildings of our immediate surroundings, that we come closest to an encounter with the past. The things that we can see and touch are those that most awaken our imagination." The meanings we ascribe to these "things" reveal our thoughts and feelings as to what is or is not relevant to our lives. How we separate things that do tell us about our past from those that just come from a different era is of immense significance in the study and understanding of ourselves. It is a collective whole that makes us what we are today and, from that perspective, enables us to make more informed decisions about the future, even if that future is just a few hours away. We may not be cognizant at 10:00 A.M. that a decision or series of actions we decide to take is the result of a lifelong process that influences what we do later in the day. Our history, both collectively and individually, is a series of stories, connections, meanings, discoveries, and much more. How and where we can find out about ourselves is the basis of this issue.

"California is a peculiar country, and contains a





Some things change; others remain the same. The Western Museum Laboratories "photo and residual file library," shown above ca. 1940, managed information used to prepare exhibits for the nation's national parks. Examples of research projects the library served were the providing of documentation for exhibits at Yosemite, Mt. Rainier, and Lassen national parks, as well as federal exhibits at the Golden Gate International Exhibition on Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay from 1939 to 1940. With offices in Berkeley and laboratories in Emeryville, the Western Museum Laboratories employed National Park Service, Civilian Conservation Corps, National Youth Administration, and Works Progress Administration personnel. Records of the activities of these and other federal agencies operating in the American Far West can be found at the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region in San Bruno, California.

*Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.*

population equally as strange." This 1849 declaration by delegate Jacob Snyder during the state's first constitutional convention might have appeared today, considering that the multicultural diversity of California's present people is similar to the gold-rush population, demonstrated by the 1852 state census, the only one ever to have been done under state auspices. How we arrived at the present, starting with the days of the native peoples and Spanish missionaries, is chronicled in archives found in virtually every county in the state.

As the repository for the constitutional working

papers, the statutory basis of the state in the original laws, the 1852 census, records of various state officials and agencies, and special collections, the California State Archives serves as the primary sample of records one finds held by governments. While Rick Crawford's essay in this special issue discusses local government records, the reader will also find mention of additional local, state, and federal governmental materials in articles by authors Blaine Lamb, Gloria Ricci Lothrop, and Waverly Lowell. That governmental records are significant is unquestioned. Studies of great social and cultural interest



that have contemporary resonance may be prompted by records created by the military, state and national judicial systems, and state and executive agencies. Of particular interest, for example, is environmental research, especially into the land-use planning process, which is well documented in these wide-ranging holdings. Another timely archival research topic in California is the study of potentially hazardous waste on military bases, which influences those who live and work in the area, as well as the future usefulness of the base.

Legal records in the State Archives range across a variety of government agencies, such as the records of the Department of Corrections, which are valuable for genealogy and social history research. Most people are unaware that the California governor can still issue offers of reward. Governor Pete Wilson has often done this during his tenure. In his article on local governmental archives, Crawford discusses the court case of Royal Barton and his eventual imprisonment at San Quentin. A look at the prison records held by the State Archives may yield further information on this individual. Taken from different repositories, pieces of the Barton story come together to form a more complete picture. Any one story may contain the germ of several others. Witness the practice of research into legislation. The legislative bill alone is not the entire account of what transpires to make law. Studies conducted into an author's or governor's chaptered bill file, the Assembly and Senate committee files, and hearing transcripts reveal the original intent behind a bill, including a summary and analysis, position statements, minutes, and background data. In some instances, this research has resulted in taxpayer savings of millions of dollars. This field of research into legislative intent continues to expand with increases in litigation.

Like the documents produced during the passage of a law, many historical government records play an important role in today's culture. Recent research into Bureau of Indian Affairs' materials, held by various branches of the National Archives, revolves around land claims and attempts by some tribes to receive official federal recognition. If a tribe is recognized, it is eligible for certain entitlements. Social research on Native Americans happens on a personal level as well, as individuals conduct ancestral research to determine their heritage and any benefits that may come with such verification. Additional information on individuals and cultures is cared for, displayed, and interpreted in tribal units, museums, archives, libraries, and historic sites. Of

particular note are also the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles and the Phoebe Apperson Hearne Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley. For military veterans, it is imperative that proper military records are kept, generally by the National Archives, so that benefits are appropriately allotted. Historical military materials have also been used to plan reunions, anniversaries, and memorials. During the past four years, this nation has hosted numerous World War II-related special events, documentaries, and exhibitions, including the controversial Enola Gay exhibit at the Smithsonian, and archival records are at the heart of such commemorations and disputes.

Architectural plans, also commonly found in a variety of institutions, are of keen interest to those attempting to reconstruct historic sites or to examine the prospect for civilian conversion of a closed military base. Architectural records have also been particularly significant in the past few years due to the natural disasters that have plagued our state, as buildings require strengthening or reconstruction. These plans may be found not only in government holdings, but also in private repositories, historical societies, and special collections in universities and colleges. Thousands of plans have been surveyed to determine emergency evacuations and repairs, including the shoring up and repair of transportation edifices destroyed by the 1989 Loma Prieta and 1994 Northridge earthquakes. Architectural plans are used in rebuilding individually owned homes, in historic preservation efforts, and in seismic stabilization of existing buildings or infrastructure. With each disaster, more is learned and added to the historic record in the hopes that future impact can be minimized. This is a poignant reminder to Californians about the vital contributions that history adds to our daily lives.

History is a collection of stories embedded not only in the people and the land, but in the various repositories as well. The reconstruction of history depends on the documentary heritage to piece the stories and meanings together as they change. History is not static. It promotes dialogue and debate, debunks myths, provides continuity, context, and connections, entertains, enlightens, educates, and lives in all of us. As each day passes, there are numerous reminders of how history is a constant in our lives. In sports, for example, baseball star Cal Ripken has surpassed the amazing consecutive game record of Lou Gehrig.

ports records are frequently broken and fans become wildly enthusiastic, but without documentary statistics, the significance of an athlete's accomplishments would not be easily known, and sports rehives in various California franchises have been established. For the millions of us who watch the annual Academy Awards or Emmys, part of the now's entertainment is dedicated to film clips, photographs, movie posters, and other ephemera from motion pictures made years ago. These are kept, as noted by some of the authors of this special issue,

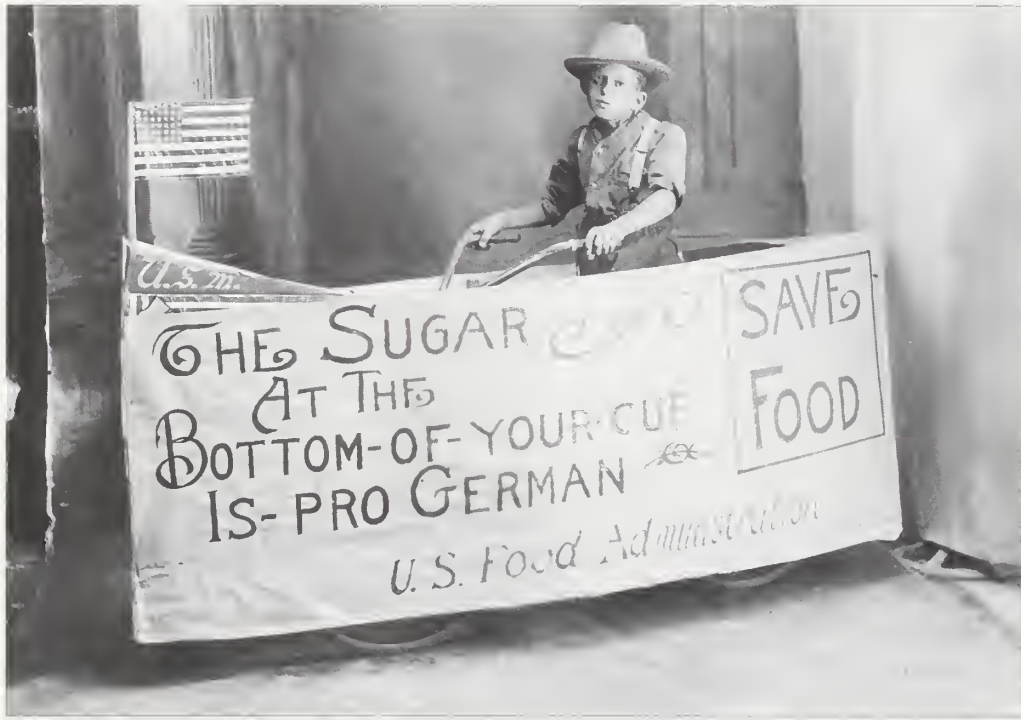
in motion picture, television, and photograph archives. Sound recordings held in various institutions, such as Stanford University's Archives of Recorded Sound, contribute greatly to documentaries, multimedia productions, interactive exhibitions, and more. A multidisciplinary approach to archival research can yield enormous riches that result in a more complete history.

In this special issue, authors Lynn Bonfield and Gloria Ricci Lothrop especially illustrate the overlap among repositories and the necessity to study



Raw Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) recruits set out in a "saw parade" on their first day of work at Yosemite National Park in June 1935, perhaps heading for a job felling trees infected with bark beetles. More than 400 unemployed young men were put to work that month alone, and during the period of CCC activity in the park, the men worked in insect control, road and trail maintenance, erosion control, landscaping, and repairing and building park facilities such as campgrounds. Later generations of park visitors to Yosemite and other state and federal wilderness areas continue to benefit from improvements made by the CCC. The records of the activities of the National Park Service in the Far West are located at the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region in San Bruno, California.  
*(Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.)*





This "bicycle boat," built by U.S. Main, was pedaled through the streets of Calexico by his son to promote food conservation during World War I. Volunteering his services to the wartime California Food Administration, Main also designed and placed food conservation posters in store windows, displayed promotional slides at the movie theater where he worked as projectionist, and successfully lobbied the city to place on its stationery the slogan "He who wastes prolongs the war. Save Food!" California Food Administration Records are at the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, San Bruno. *Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.*

a diverse array of historical materials in many topics, even if it means that pieces of the story are scattered across the country. And, like a jigsaw puzzle, some pieces have yet to be discovered. Herein lies the breadth of historical research methodology and the true fun of the task—the detective who lies within us and the various resources utilized to achieve results. As Suzanne Dewberry notes, "the tenacity of Sherlock Holmes" is required. Explorations into archival holdings can result in incredible findings by both archivists and researchers. At the State Archives, for example, one active record group used by patrons is that of the military. Contained within it is a sizable collection of nineteenth-century Indian war papers. In 1950, a researcher discovered an 1864 letter from Abraham Lincoln to Frederick Low, the California governor. The presidential letter asked for a political favor (some things never change). These records also yielded a July 17, 1865, letter from George A. Custer, also to Governor Low, asking for a similar favor. These are not isolated instances. The thrill of locating a cache of women's rights activist Caroline Severance papers in a storage shed, as noted in Lothrop's article in this issue, is an example of another archival task—the

rescue of significant historical materials hidden away in strange places. Such a rescue is not uncommon, and it often follows an event that sparks an investigation, such as the article Lothrop had previously published.

Throughout the history of California, commemorative occasions have inspired increased attention to past activities, with contemporary celebrations resulting. As Timothy L. Ericson points out, "human beings are unable to resist celebrating any anniversary divisible by twenty-five."<sup>2</sup> With that maxim, and given modern California's incipient one-hundred-fiftieth birthday, there is a tremendous interest in nostalgia (history for fun) right now, and all types of repositories are being searched for the right story or historic tidbit to contribute to various celebratory venues. Institutions that hold these treasures are also staging special exhibitions and educational programs, as well as the production of keepsakes, videos, and elaborate publications. With the state's sesquicentennial so quickly approaching, hundreds of exciting plans are being made to commemorate the events that led to the thirty-first addition to the Union: the Gold Rush, the arrival of thousands of pioneers from throughout the world,



and statehood. Hardly a community in this Golden State will be left untouched by this three-year series of colorful programs, coordinated by a special commission.

And where will the background information come from?—the rich mosaic embroidered in our historic fabric as it is housed and cared for in the innumerable collections dedicated to the understanding of what is California. Oral history interviews, records of past events, photographs, diaries, costume design, native American traditions, music, decorative arts, mining techniques, the debates of the 1849 constitutional convention, motion pictures, and even material collected by religious orders, are just some examples of the types of materials used for research to accomplish an event of sesquicentennial magnitude. Alongside the myriad events, publications, keepsakes, and memorabilia, other tangible results of the three-year commemoration will be educational programs associated with California history. Gold discovery, mining, cultural contributions, statehood, community building, and family history will be targeted for special projects. The opportunities to expand into any field are countless. This special issue of *California History* highlights just a few of the themes that will be incorporated into sesquicentennial activities.

The children of California will particularly benefit from the sesquicentennial in many ways. The Department of Education's *History-Social Science Framework* encourages the use of primary material in the classroom. For example, students use original sources, maps, census data, and even cemetery records to interpret aspects of history. They locate, select, and organize the information into meaningful analysis. In the remaining years of this century, thousands of households across the state will be involved in some way in projects emanating from schools as part of the sesquicentennial. Vital records such as birth, marriage, and death certificates, citizenship papers, tax returns, real estate transactions, and other family papers will soon take on a new importance as the children incorporate their family and community history into stories of their own. Students will want photographs, videos, and artifacts to help in their interpretation. They may even conduct their own oral history interviews or trace their genealogical lineage. Living history programs, role playing, re-enactments, and mock trials, as well as visits to historic sites, architecturally significant buildings, or museums are some additional ways that educators and students will bring

history alive and experience first-hand the excitement of past lives. In the end, the children will have had participatory learning experiences that allow them to make connections to the past, link them to contemporary society, and place California within the context of United States and international history.

What can make this possible is the archival record—the music, the images, the personal papers, the sounds, the art, the historic sites, the material culture, the oral history, and the built environment. Authors published in *California History*, and historians generally, use material such as this as the basis of their research.

There are a multitude of ways that the documentary heritage housed in archives can be used to answer the questions "how" and "why" and not just "who, when, and where." Besides the events and projects associated with the sesquicentennial and the school system, there are several publishing firms that cater to a child's understanding of California. For example, the Kids History Company in Sonoma takes primary sources and weaves them together to make truthful tales more appealing to children. The historical novel has long been a popular source of the spirit of a particular time and subject. The most notable work on California of this genre is Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*. Unfortunately, this 1884 novel sparked a number of myths that still linger. Television mini-series made from historical novels, such as those based on the works of Alex Haley, James Michener, and Larry McMurtry, are quite popular and have fueled interest in documents. Museums have become very sophisticated in the use of historic records through technology, and many of the interpretive exhibitions are interactive. Ken Burns's televised series on the Civil War and its resultant popularity sparked an increased appreciation of the archival record, as well as the production of videos, PBS specials, and other documentaries, all based on what we and our ancestors have said or done and which appeal to a variety of constituencies. There is one educational forum that takes place annually, first on the county level and then statewide—California History Day. Thousands of students in the secondary schools participate in a competition that revolves around a specific historical theme. Winners move to the national competitions. It is amazing to see the exhibitions, performances, media, and papers that are prepared. The dedication and imagination in the use of documents brought to this event by the participants are inspiring.

Finding archival material can be challenging, but numerous advances have been made in making information available. This field is expanding constantly because of technological advances, resulting in easier access to the available resources. There are, of course, the more traditional approaches, such as using the printed finding aid, inventory, or guide. Footnotes in a publication are also useful sources. In many cases, a phone call or visit to the archival institution is most useful. Today, however, one may find the required information without ever leaving home, provided suitable technology is at hand. Repository holdings may be found in databases, through the Internet, electronic mail, the National Inventory of Documentary Sources, and the World Wide Web. Even oral history interviews can be accessed in some cases through a database. In some institutions it is also possible to retrieve information through laser discs, CD ROM, microfilm, and interpretive, interactive devices. In California, one particular and widely publicized database is the History Computerization Project, which is accessible in several different ways. This project, to provide an example of what is available for users, allows for information exchange, as well as cataloging collections, writing historical pieces, and locating repositories and historical organizations from a database of over 2,200 entries. The sheer amount of information contained in such technological forms is astounding and growing every day.

There is, of course, nothing that beats the excitement of seeing and holding the real thing, the researcher's ultimate reward. Even the physical shape or condition of an item may reveal a story that may not be discovered by any other form of access. Witness the lines of people waiting to see the Charters of Freedom at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Annually, more than one million people view these documents. To discover a missing segment of one's research or a valuable item that has languished for decades is thrilling. Archivists hear many a researcher exclaim with excitement upon discovering that particular photograph, manuscript, or some other evidence that had alluded human eyes. These exclamations are not limited to researchers; archivists and manuscript curators are just as guilty. Historical detectives never know what may be found, and that is what makes history exciting.

The use and meaning of the historical record changes continually, providing new insights and perspectives that are manifested in treatment of contemporary issues. The primary motivations for

recording information range from personal, social, economic, and legal to symbolic and functional. Who you are as a person touches all aspects.<sup>3</sup> Naturally, there is some overlap. For instance, for those seeking Medicare or Social Security benefits, personal and legal papers are required. Science and medical research is based on all that has preceded in the field. Without archives there is no foundation on which to build research. Each generation would have to re-invent the wheel, literally. Evidence from the past connects the living with the present and thereby the future. Without history we would not know ourselves or how to proceed into tomorrow. It is our documentary and material culture heritage that allows us to be who we are. As the years march forward, the significance of archives increases, and the researchers and archivists are the vehicles for revealing the inspirational stories embedded in the documents. That means we are all in a partnership, that each and every one of us has something to contribute to the understanding of our heritage and culture, to the stories that bind us together and make communities. We are all creators and interpreters, and archivists are the keepers of society's memory.

Each documentary item is created for some purpose. As the nature of documents and their interpretation changes over time, archivists must be cognizant of the prevailing trends and strive to save, care for, and make accessible those materials that tell the stories. This appraisal process is not an easy task, but it is extremely powerful and important. What is preserved now can influence future generations in unforeseen ways. Keepers of the records must project into the future what information might be necessary and of interest in documenting history, recognizing that it is impossible and unnecessary to save everything. This is especially difficult when deciding which items of the recent past should be preserved. Generally, of all the voluminous modern records created, only one to four percent is considered to have archival value. It is from this small percentage that we take our identity and from which researchers in the next millennium will study and analyze us.

In our complex, contemporary society, the value of archives and manuscripts has intensified. The archival record is unique, original, multidisciplinary, and multicultural. It is as diverse as the society that creates the history. What is so wonderful is that there is such an incredible and continually changing array of stories yet to be discovered and explored—a delightful proposition.



Archives, traditionally underfunded, rely on the time and effort donated by volunteers and student interns. These National Archives—Pacific Sierra Region volunteers are working to preserve records of the Angel Island Immigration Station, which was created by the federal government to enforce the Chinese Exclusion Laws. Conducting such “holdings maintenance” on records such as these is just one of the many essential jobs that volunteers perform. They are often an integral part of the archives staff, assisting with reference and administration in addition to records preservation. *Photograph by Waverly Lowell, 1988.*



The purpose of this issue is to enlighten and provide insights into a broad cross-section of California's history and to illustrate the ways in which archives provide the foundations upon which this history is built. In this issue, archives will speak through the stories they can tell. It is through these stories that we show the relevance of archival records to our present lives.

In “Highways and Waterways: Two Episodes in California's History,” Blaine P. Lamb examines the history of things we take for granted. California's rapid development and economic success were a result of the excellent transportation systems developed on the state's rivers, railroads, and highways. Using a variety of sources, Lamb illustrates the political complexity involved in the growth of the highway system and the state's long tradition of linkages between state and federal government, grassroots movements, and business to get things done.

Using local governmental archives as a model, Richard Crawford shows us that, surprisingly, the records of politics and government are more about people than bureaucracy. Politics and government are ubiquitous, and so are the records they create. Found in official archives on the local, state, and federal levels, as well as in libraries, historical soci-

eties, and college and university collections, they record the development of policy and the effects of its implementation on the population, family history, actions of politicians and voters, and growth of cities and industry. In fact, every area of society and culture is touched by and reflected in the records of politics and government.

Family history and genealogy—who we are, where we came from, and what legacy we leave—are important to most of us. In “Two Families of Teachers: Personal Stories and Family Histories in Manuscript Collections,” Lynn Bonfield tells us that “personal narratives give specific meaning to the general historical realities of existence.” Using diaries, letters, newspapers, oral histories, cemetery records, biographical material, and municipal records, she reveals the experiences of a nineteenth-century gold-rush family from Vermont and a twentieth-century African American family from San Francisco within the context of larger historical movements and events. In contrast, Suzanne Dewberry's “Public Records and Genealogy: A Serendipitous Adventure” focuses on famous Hollywood figures and on the author's own family to outline the range of personal information that can be located in government records.

The environment and technology are integral parts of our past, just as they are of our present. The physical world we live in is a direct result of society's actions over time. For example, California's long-term dependence on water and the impact this relationship has had on the environment is demonstrated in stories about the Truckee River and the Hetch Hetchy Valley in the article by Waverly Lowell, "Pollution, Production, and Power: Natural Resources, Society, and Technology." Scientists who use new technology to study both the interaction of subatomic particles in order to build models for understanding the universe and individuals who develop models for responding to health epidemics create and use records in new ways. Robin Chandler, in "The Promise of Research and Development in Physics and Medicine: The Quest for SPEAR and Living with AIDS," explores new archival methodologies developed to respond to new global methods of communication and scientific research. She uses records and oral histories related to physics and medicine to explore research at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center and community responses to the AIDS crises in San Francisco to demonstrate how archivists must actively participate in the creation of records to insure lasting documentation of significant events.

In "Worlds of Leisure, Worlds of Grace," Sara Hodson and Peter Blodgett take us on a luxurious visit to Yosemite Valley and into the world of literature and the arts. By using primarily personal papers within the fields of tourism, literature, and the performing arts, they illustrate the relationships between art, nature, and personal experience and between art, fiction, and history. In addition to the stories they tell, other elements of recreation, entertainment, and the arts recorded in California's archives include historical collections devoted to architecture, sports, the motion picture industry, world's fairs, photography, and both the fine and the performing arts.

Alison Moore and Lynn Downey use the archives of Pacific Telephone and Levi Strauss & Co. as exam-

ples to demonstrate how business archives open up entirely new realms of sources for historical research. In "Black Telephones and Blue Denim," they illustrate that far from being limited to financial, technical, or personnel files, records created by businesses document nearly every aspect of society, including domestic life; the who, how, and why of communication; and the built and natural environments.

Sarah Cooper's "On the Archival Trail of the CIO and Hollywood's Labor Wars" teaches us the value of oral history as a way to supplement the written record. Cooper points out that different types of documents are created for different uses and that they have historical value within given contexts. Ephemera such as flyers, posters, and newspapers, for example, can be essential primary archival sources for studying labor history, performing arts, and advertising.

The study of ethnicity and gender is critical for understanding the past, present, and future of diverse California. Gloria Ricci Lothrop surveys repositories throughout the state that hold primary sources useful for researching and documenting the roles of women, immigration, and ethnic communities in social history and the cultural landscape. Professor Lothrop also discusses a type of source too often overlooked yet holding immense treasures: archival material in the care of various religious orders in the state.

Like a kaleidoscope, each of these articles presents diverse elements of California's past mingled with sources that illustrate the stories to form a colorful, dynamic whole. Grouped by general topic, the articles present a sampling of types of historic documentation related to particular areas of study. Yet it becomes clear to the reader immediately that there is an overlap and interconnectedness of source and story throughout the articles. The editors hope that readers enjoy the information contained in these essays as much as the authors enjoyed sharing it with you.

CHS



The striking main reading room of new California State Archives facility.

Opened in 1955, the State Archives, and the Secretary of State/State Archives complex of which it is a part, occupies one square block near the State Capitol in Sacramento. The archives itself contains about 175,000 square feet, including vaults for valuable documents, processing and preservation laboratories, and six floors of environmentally controlled storage stacks designed to allow the later construction of two additional floors to accommodate holdings projected over the next fifty years. Work

is also underway to install in the building a large, state-of-the-art museum of California governmental and political history featuring modern, interactive exhibits. One of the most important archives facilities to be built in the United States during this generation, the new California State Archives is truly an archives for the state's past, present, and future.

*Courtesy Eslerick Homsey Dodge and Davis, San Francisco. Photograph copyright by Mark Citret.*



*See notes beginning on page 105.*

*Director of the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, Waverly B. Lowell received her master's degree in history from Rutgers University and her degree in Library Science from the University of California at Berkeley. She compiled Architectural Records in the San Francisco Bay Area: A Guide to Research while serving as director of the California Cooperative Preservation of Architectural Records. She has presently been writing and speaking on Chinese exclusion and environmental records. Active in the Society of American Archivists and the Society of California Archivists, Lowell was awarded the 1993 Archivist Award of Excellence presented by the California Heritage Preservation Commission.*

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## HIGHWAYS AND WATERWAYS

### Two Episodes in California's Transportation History

*by Blaine P. Lamb*

Transportation in California is modern, sophisticated, and complex. Over the past century and a half, engineers and entrepreneurs have devised technologies and designed and built systems that have served as models throughout the world. The local, state, and federal archives of California are rich with stories of the state's transportation pioneers. They are contained within official agency minutes, correspondence, reports, and journals, and from these sources are drawn the following two narratives. The first is of the early years of state highway development, which established the foundation for the state-of-the-art concrete and steel system of roads and freeways Californians know today. The second is of commercial river navigation during the steamboat era, a method that, while an important component of California's nineteenth-century transportation network, was rendered obsolete by newer and more efficient means of moving goods and people.

The enactment of Senate Bill 805 by the California legislature on March 27, 1895, created a new state agency called the Bureau of Highways and for the first time clearly defined the state's interest in its public roads. Heretofore, most California roadbuilding had been undertaken by local governments or private parties, and the state government's highway development had been a haphazard and often slipshod affair. California's first legislature in 1851 had established the legal basis for public roads and had given the surveyor general the responsibility for making plans and suggestions for their construction. The lawmakers, however, had failed to provide that officer with either an adequate salary or a budget sufficient to carry out his duties.

One of these duties involved the location of a wagon road over the Sierra Nevada to the Carson Valley of western Nevada. In April 1855, the legislature passed an act authorizing the survey and construction by the state of the road, at a cost not to exceed \$105,000. Unsurprisingly, when it came time actually to appropriate the funds, the lawmakers did

not come forth with a single penny. An exasperated surveyor general, S. H. Marlette, faced the embarrassment of having to solicit money from the public. To carry out the survey, he placed advertisements in area newspapers that asked for \$500 "on the credit of the state." Subscriptions raised in Mother Lode counties enabled the surveying to be done over the summer of 1855. As a final irony, however, the state auditor refused to reimburse those who had provided backing for the project, and, in 1856, the California Supreme Court declared the Wagon Road Act to be unconstitutional. Eventually, private interests used the information generated by Marlette's surveys to construct and operate the "Lake Tahoe Wagon Road" between Placerville and the Carson Valley. It remained in private hands as a toll road until by an act of the legislature in 1895 the state took the route over.<sup>1</sup>

Judicial hostility and the lack of legislative interest in highway projects resulted in practically no state work being done throughout most of the remainder of the nineteenth century. Counties and private toll road operators, on the other hand, took an active role in road building, although the amount and quality of construction varied widely from county to county and region to region. Local politics and patronage, rather than skill and professionalism in route selection and construction, marked much of the work that was done. In short, as the twentieth century neared, California lacked anything approaching a cohesive highway system.

The nationwide bicycle craze of the 1890s, however, spurred Californians into re-examining their apathy toward highways. Well-off urban bicycle enthusiasts and their clubs, seeking places to ride outside the cities, began demanding improvements in the state's network of roadways. They balked at paying tolls for travel over private thoroughfares, and found most county and local roads outside the cities to be rutted, poorly drained bogs in winter and dust-choked bumpy tracks in summer. The cyclists soon allied with farmers, merchants, and other ship-



Bureau of Highways commissioners Richard Irvine (left) and Joseph Lees Maude (right) pause during their survey at Riverside in 1896 with the buckboard and team purchased by the bureau in the year before. Maje, Irvine's Gordon setter, sits in the rear of the vehicle.  
He traveled with the commissioners throughout California.

*Courtesy California Department of Transportation.*

pers dissatisfied with rates and conditions set by California's railroads. They looked to a unified network of passable roads to allow them to ship goods to market by wagon rather than by rail. At the same time, the railroads, secure in their dominance of California transportation, also promoted better roads to allow producers to get more goods to local freight stations. Similarly, steamship companies joined in seeking easier ways for passengers and cargo to reach wharves and terminals. Rounding out the campaign were humane societies, with the goal of alleviating hardships imposed on draft animals by inadequate dirt roads. Collectively, these interests comprised what came to be known as the "Good Roads Movement."

On a national level, Good Roads enthusiasts succeeded in prompting the federal government in 1893 to establish the Office of Road Inquiry (later the Bureau of Public Roads) to study ways in which public highways might be improved and to assist local and state movements. Events in Washington encouraged the cause in California. Good Roads promoters called statewide conventions in 1893 and 1894 to formulate policy and influence the legislature to increase government's role in bettering the state's

highways. A third conference, held in Sacramento in February 1895, featured an appearance by General Roy Stone, head of the federal Office of Road Inquiry. In his keynote address, he urged Californians to keep up the pressure on their lawmakers and public officials to commit to a program of road improvement. The response was enthusiastic. Governor James Budd urged action, and the following month the legislature responded by creating the Bureau of Highways. The 1895 act provided for the appointment of three "competent persons" to compose the bureau during its two-year statutory life. The purpose of the new agency was investigatory and advisory. It was to hold public meetings in each county and collect information from the counties on local roads. The bureau was also to examine the geography and topography of the state, assessing the water supply and the availability of road-building materials, as well as preparing standard plans for bridges, culverts, and other features that could be used by counties for their own road projects.<sup>2</sup>

Governor Budd's three appointed commissioners, Marsden Manson, Joseph Lees Maude, and Richard Irvine, met in Sacramento on April 11, 1895, to organize the bureau. Manson was elected chairman, and



directed Maude to begin consultation with the governor and state prison directors for the operation of a rock-crushing plant at Folsom Prison. The plant, which had been authorized by the legislature that March, was to provide "metal" (pulverized stone) for use on local roads. The agencies developed an arrangement whereby the bureau would handle orders for the metal, and the prison would receive the revenue. The Union Iron Works of San Francisco received the contract to build the crusher, and the Southern Pacific Railroad, anxious to show its support for Good Roads, offered to haul the stone at a reduced rate. Despite the high quality of the metal and favorable transportation charges to be saved, the counties seemed disinterested. Orders from municipalities, on the other hand, kept the crusher running at capacity. Within a year, thoroughfares in Sacramento, Stockton, Marysville, Vallejo, and other northern California towns were being covered with stone from Folsom.<sup>3</sup>

While the Bureau of Highways and prison officials forged the first of what would be many cooperative agreements for convict work on highways in the decades to come, commissioners Manson, Maude, and Irvine also prepared for their survey of the state's roads. They purchased supplies, along with a team of horses and a wagon. By the end of May 1895, the arrangements had been completed and the commissioners began traveling. They visited every part of the state, covering more than seven thousand miles the first year and nine thousand the second. The commissioners met with boards of supervisors, Good Roads clubs, and civic organizations, listening to what local residents regarded as the most pressing highway problems and offering encouragement.

What the commissioners found throughout California was depressing, the result of "generations of neglect and apathy." The state's highway system, if it could be called such, had been developed during a period of "road decadence," when the best and brightest civil engineers went into the lucrative fields of mining or railroading, leaving highway work to less skilled practitioners. In many cases, counties adopted an unprofessional attitude toward their roads, allowing private landowners to encroach on rights-of-way, and, in some cases, to change alignments altogether if it suited them. Other times, local road problems derived from governmental policies that went beyond mere negligence:

In several counties, the Bureau has ascertained that officials have selected for employees on roads those owing them for merchandise, food, board or drinks. Large bills have thus been incurred by the county, and personal indebtedness indirectly paid from public funds....<sup>4</sup>

The commissioners estimated that, as a result of such practices, \$18,000,000 of public money had been squandered on practically worthless highway projects since 1885. They speculated that the only reason California had not been bankrupted by this waste was that the money had remained in the state. The solution to this state of affairs was simple, but at the same time revolutionary—the state itself should construct and maintain a system of highways serving all of California. The state roadways proposed in 1896 by the bureau covered 4,500 miles, tapping timber, fruit, farming, and mining regions, and connecting the principal population centers and county seats of each county. The routes selected stretched from Mexico (south of San Diego) to Oregon, but, since no interstate roads existed with which to connect, only one, the Lake Tahoe Wagon Road, ran to the eastern border.

The financing of this ambitious network was to come from a tax of one quarter of one mill on every dollar of assessed property in the state. This levy, as well as other proposals defining and locating the highway system, went before the legislature in 1897. What emerged from the capitol, however, proved both disheartening and harmful to the Good Roads cause. The legislature modified the bureau's recommendations so that almost any road, no matter how insignificant, could be classified as a state highway. In addition, the tax was there, but now most of the proceeds went directly to the counties, with little accountability. The legislature's proposals were so off the mark that they fell victim to the governor's veto.<sup>5</sup>

The failure of the bureau's legislative program did not end California's attempt to control its roadways. Although the bureau went out of existence when its statutory authorization ended in 1897, the role of the state in highway matters had been firmly established. From then on, few questioned the legality, or even the propriety, of government planning and assisting in road development. That same year, the legislature replaced the bureau with a Department of Highways. The new agency, also composed of three commissioners (after one year to become a single commissioner), continued the survey work begun by the bureau, but it too was unsuccessful in establishing a state highway system. The department did, however, actively pursue the development and maintenance of individual highways, beginning with the Lake Tahoe Wagon Road, and continuing with other routes in remote mountain regions acquired and designated by the legislature to be state roads.<sup>6</sup>

Full recognition of the state's role in highway development came in 1902, with the enactment of a constitutional amendment establishing the legislature's authority to create a highway system. Eight

Latitude of Cape Cod —

42° N

Lat. of Home

Sketch Map —

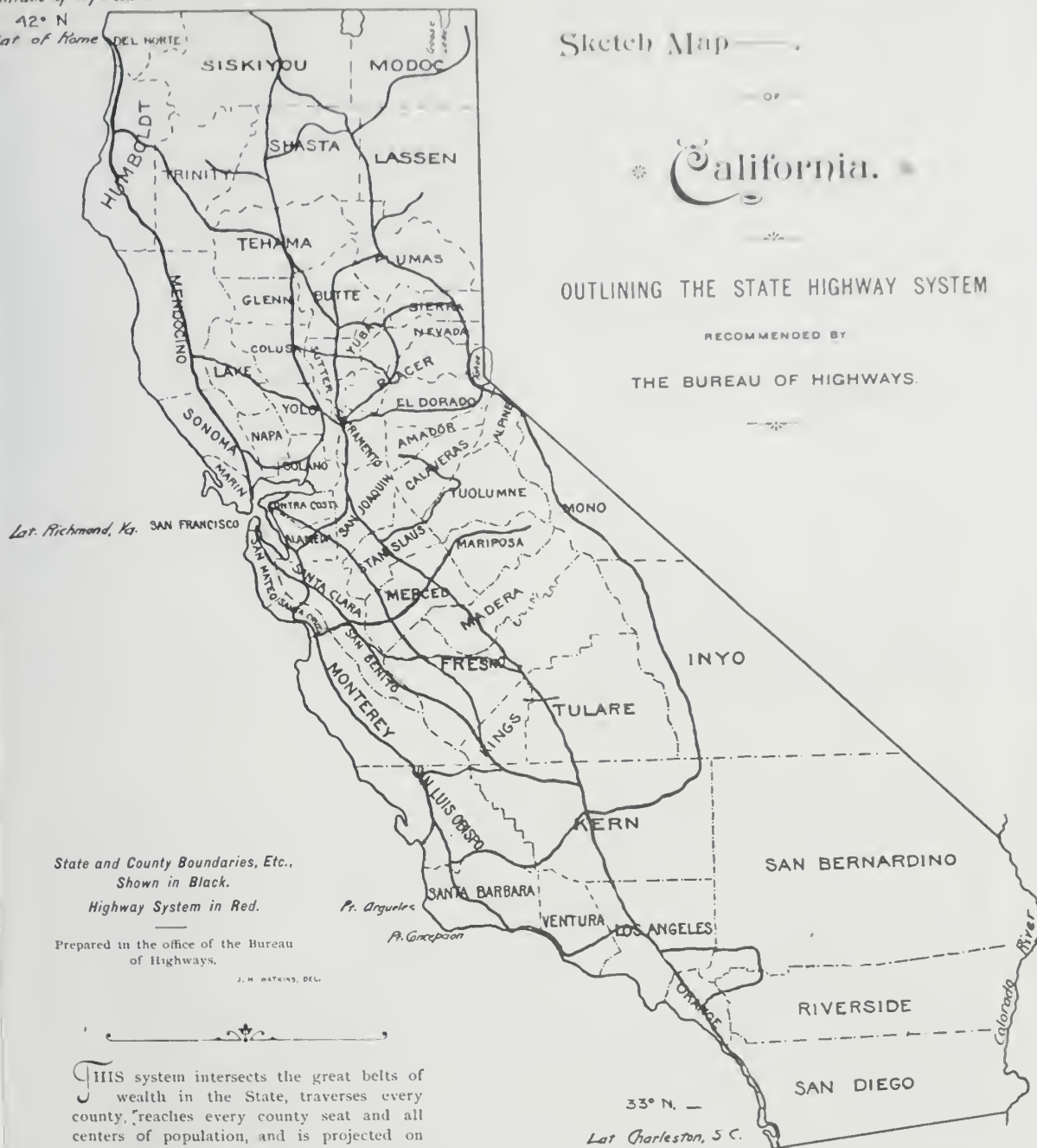
OF

California.

OUTLINING THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

RECOMMENDED BY

THE BUREAU OF HIGHWAYS.



State and County Boundaries, Etc.,  
Shown in Black.

Highway System in Red.

Prepared in the office of the Bureau  
of Highways.

J. H. WATKINS, DEL.

THIS system intersects the great belts of wealth in the State, traverses every county, reaches every county seat and all centers of population, and is projected on the best grades possible.

The Bureau of Highways recommended an ambitious state highway system for California. Its routes closely approximated those chosen following the passage of the first state highway bonds in 1910, and bear a striking resemblance to today's interstate and state highway network.

Courtesy California Department of Transportation.

years later, voters narrowly passed an \$18-million bond issue to construct just such a system. Engineers and planners began laying out this network, which would give Californians their first modern highways. The roads now had to be paved, with gentler grades and curves to meet the demands of an

increasing number of automobiles and motor trucks. The routes they adopted for the new bond-issue highways closely paralleled those laid out by Manson, Maude, and Irvine a decade and a half earlier, a testament to the foresight and hard work of the old Bureau of Highways.



The materials for research relating to the inception of state road construction, as well as the history of California highway development in general, are as varied as the highways themselves. Almost every local or regional historical society, library, or museum contains records relating to roads—such as photographs, maps, construction documents, and reminiscences of roadway engineers or workers. The beginnings of federal highway policy are found in the Records of the Bureau of Public Roads and in the Records of the Federal Highway Administration, both in the National Archives. The Pacific Sierra Branch of the National Archives in San Bruno, California, contains project files, photographs, blueprints, and route maps of federal aid highways in California starting in 1916.

The early history of state government's interest in highways is documented in the California State Archives in Sacramento. The State Archives holds reports relating to the state's first highway officer, the surveyor general, as well as survey records of the Lake Tahoe Wagon Road and the papers of the commissioner appointed to oversee it when it became the first state road. Documents chronicling the organization and activities of the Bureau of Highways and its successors, the Department of

Highways, Department of Public Works, Division of Highways, and California Highway Commission, also are found in the State Archives. These records include the minutes of meetings of the first commissioners, which detail the organization, staffing, survey work, political maneuvering, personnel matters, and financial transactions of the bureau and department. Minutes of the California Highway Commission cover the laying out and adoption of routes and the awarding of contracts, beginning in 1911. Contracts and progress reports dating from 1912 in the commission records and Division of Highways Headquarters files chronicle the construction of the system authorized by the 1910 bond issue. In addition, the archives has several state road maps and plans of bridges and other structures associated with early highway development. Its photograph collections contain a great variety of official images and albums, arranged by Department of Public Works highway divisions, and documenting construction work on road projects throughout California from 1912 through the middle of the twentieth century.

The State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) maintains a transportation library and history center in Sacramento, with extensive plans and spec-



The Good Roads Movement did not end with the establishment of the Bureau of Highways in 1895. It continued to attract enthusiastic members throughout the early automobile era in California. This view is of a demonstration highway project about 1915.

*Courtesy California State Archives.*

fications and photographic and cartographic collections. Its holdings emphasize early bridges and other structures, as well as state and federal highway maps of California, published manuals, technical reports, oral histories, clippings, and a run of *California Highways and Public Works*, the official publication of the agency from the 1920s through mid-century. This journal contains numerous photographs, histories, and frequent interviews. Reminiscences of employees who even then were considered "pioneers" in road building, round out the collection.

Of lesser importance for the early period of California highway development are the holdings of the Institute of Transportation Studies Library at the University of California, Berkeley. While containing a valuable selection of *California Highways and Public Works* and other early published reports and secondary sources, its holdings emphasize more contemporary state, national, and international transportation issues. The wide-ranging manuscript and printed materials collections of the Bancroft Library at Berkeley frequently touch on many aspects of local and statewide transportation history, including road development. The Bancroft, for example, has the papers of Marsden Manson, although these tend to focus on his tenure as San Francisco City Engineer, after he left the Bureau of Highways and Department of Highways.

Other examples of how archives may be used to research transportation history concern the water-ways, which served as California's first commercial highways. Beginning in the 1840s, water transportation brought people and manufactured goods to the hinterlands and hauled the state's mineral and agricultural wealth to coastal markets and beyond. The Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers saw most of this traffic, with the cities of Sacramento and Stockton developing into major ports, first for sailing vessels and later for steamboats. Eventually, just about every stream that could conceivably float a boat competed for freight and passenger traffic, with varying degrees of success. One such water-course, central California's Mokelumne River, echoed with the commands of captains and the whistles of steamers from the days of the Gold Rush to the middle of the twentieth century. Yet it never lived up to the expectations of its promoters. The Mokelumne's story, nonetheless, typifies the important role that water-borne transportation played in the economy and society along California's rivers, and illustrates the archival materials that would support the examination of that history.

Rising in the Sierra Nevada, the Mokelumne River flows swiftly southwestward through mountain and foothill gorges, where gravel beds rich with gold

led prospectors to strike at Oregon Bar, Rich Bar, Big Bar, and Mokelumne Hill. Once out of the uplands, however, the river adopts a more leisurely pace, meandering through the plains of the Central Valley and out into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. There, after dividing into north and south forks and flowing around Staten Island, the Mokelumne becomes one again, just in time to empty into the San Joaquin River.

It is with the flatland portion of the Mokelumne's 147-mile course that this story is concerned. Sailing vessels, principally sloops and schooners, began navigating up the Mokelumne from San Francisco and Suisun bays in the early 1850s. Their destination was Mokelumne City, located at the stream's confluence with the Cosumnes River. Freight and passengers bound for the central Mother Lode sailed this far and then were transferred to wagons and coaches for the bone-jarring trip inland. The diminutive 26-ton paddlewheeler *Laura Ellen* began regular trips between San Francisco and Mokelumne City in 1861, but her service on this route proved to be short-lived. The winter of 1861-1862 was exceptionally wet, resulting in massive flooding along central and northern California rivers. The torrents wiped out Mokelumne City, causing a suspension of river traffic and a corresponding shortage of supplies in the mines.

While the former residents of Mokelumne City reeled under the disaster, San Joaquin County physician and farmer Dean Jewett Locke saw the floods as an opportunity. He sought to advance navigation upriver to his ranch and settlement at Lockeford on the Mokelumne, some eighteen miles northeast of Stockton. That location, he hoped, would then become the center for transshipment of goods and passengers headed for the mines. In January 1862, Locke chartered the *Fanny Ann*, a 110-foot-long steamboat, loaded her with supplies, and dispatched her up the San Joaquin and Mokelumne rivers. A general celebration ensued on February 20, when the *Fanny Ann* reached Woodbridge, a river town a few miles downstream from Lockeford. There, the local business community dined, and particularly, wine, the captain and convinced him to declare Woodbridge to be the head of navigation and go no farther. Still convinced that Lockeford should become the upstream terminus for Mokelumne River traffic, Dr. Locke obtained another steamer, the *Pert*, which finally did succeed in reaching its objective on April 5, 1862.

For the next few years, when water levels on the Mokelumne permitted, the *Pert* made trips between the San Francisco Bay area and Lockeford, transporting cargoes and passengers bound for the central mines. The venture, however, did not prove profitable, largely because fluctuating river levels



above the fork prevented navigation during much of the year. In 1865, Locke gave up steamer operation, concentrating on his Mokelumne River Improvement Company, a venture he and some associates had started to keep the river free of obstacles in return for the right to collect tolls on traffic. The Improvement Company continued to operate into the 1870s, but as water levels fell because of the diversion of river water, the head of navigation kept moving farther downriver, first to Woodbridge, and then to New Hope Landing at the fork.

A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers investigation in October 1881 determined the Mokelumne above the fork to be "very narrow and crooked, in places not over 60 feet wide between the banks, and very much choked with snags, rafts of fallen trees and overhanging brush. At the time of the examination the river-bed contained so little water that a small skiff could not be forced through."

Below the fork, however, the river was described as "excellent; and with the exception of three snags at Miller's Ferry and Snodgrass Slough...generally free from all obstructions." If it could be kept clear, the lower river could support a considerable volume of commercial traffic, mostly potatoes, wheat, barley, hay, grapes, livestock, and wood.<sup>8</sup>

While the wheels of government creaked slowly toward implementation of a federal project to remove the snags, a fleet of small schooners and sloops kept up a brisk trade serving the farms in the delta lands of the lower Mokelumne. The principal destination for these craft was Brack's Landing on the South Fork. Swiss immigrant Jacob Brack, a farmer and entrepreneur west of Woodbridge, had constructed a forty-foot-wide canal from the Mokelumne one and one-half miles up what is now Hog Slough. There, he developed a wharf and shipping facility, which quickly came to be used by area farmers who saw the advantage of cutting off several miles of transportation expense to either Stockton or Sacramento. Brack even employed his own steamboat, the 162-ton *Caroline*, to haul area produce to San Francisco. In 1882, Brack joined with several other farmers and businessmen in promoting a railroad from the Mokelumne to the Sierra Nevada foothills in order to tap rich farming and ranching districts, as well as the mines and tourist destinations. The result was the three-foot-gauge San Joaquin & Sierra Nevada Railroad, which began at Brack's Landing and, in April 1884, reached its eastern terminus at Valley Springs in Calaveras County.

All construction materials for the San Joaquin & Sierra Nevada, even the dirt needed to build a solid roadbed through marshy land in western San Joaquin County, had to be shipped up the Mokelumne via Brack's landing. In return for stock in the company, Jacob Brack had turned over the

canal and landing to the railroad, which expanded the wharf, building two sets of tracks in anticipation of increased commerce.

Despite the enthusiasm of its promoters, the increased commerce promised by the San Joaquin & Sierra Nevada never materialized. The combined efforts of the Southern Pacific and Stockton shipping interests proved to be too much, and in 1886 the short line gave up and became a part of the Southern Pacific system. The canal and landing reverted to Brack, who continued to allow the railroad's new owners to use them. He also invested heavily in improving the landing, even going so far as to dig a new four-mile-long, sixty-foot-wide canal and an expanded harbor. Over the next decade, however, rail and river traffic became more infrequent. Farmers and other shippers found it more convenient to haul directly to the standard gauge at Lodi than to use the narrow gauge and transfer at Brack's to river craft. In 1897, the Southern Pacific abandoned its trackage west of Woodbridge, effectively ending Jacob Brack's dream of making the Mokelumne River a major commercial route.<sup>9</sup>

Brack's failure, however, did not mean the end of transportation on the Mokelumne. The federal project finally gained congressional approval, and the U.S. snagboat *Seizer* appeared in 1884, and for the next decade its huge forward beam removed snags and kept the river clear of obstructions. This allowed large sternwheelers of the California Transportation Company, such as the 406-ton *Aurora*, the 377-ton *Coustance*, and the much more substantial 627-ton and 632-ton steamers *Reform* and *Onisbo*, to dominate the Mokelumne's potato, onion, and bean trade into the next century.<sup>10</sup> These vessels called at numerous wharves and landings on both forks of the river, picking up passengers and freight for the overnight trip to San Francisco and providing vital economic and social links for farm families in the otherwise isolated Delta.

The appearance of rail competition during the 1910s with the construction of the Southern Pacific's Walnut Grove branch, and the entrance of paved highways into the Delta during the following two decades, cut significantly into the California Transportation Company's business. Farmers found it much simpler and less expensive to transport their produce either to the railroad or directly to market by motor truck, and to travel by automobile, than to ship or book passage on one of the majestic, but ponderous, steamers. The economic hard times of the 1930s delivered a fatal blow to commercial transportation along secondary streams such as the Mokelumne. In 1938, the *Reform*, last of the old Mokelumne River steamers, was laid up and abandoned. World War II brought a brief revival, but after 1945, the only commercial traffic consisted of an



A frequent and welcome sight on the Mokelumne and other rivers in northern and central California during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the U.S. snagboat *Seizer* had been built in Stockton in 1881.

Her large forward beam was used to remove snags and overhanging branches from along riverbanks.

*Courtesy Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific.*

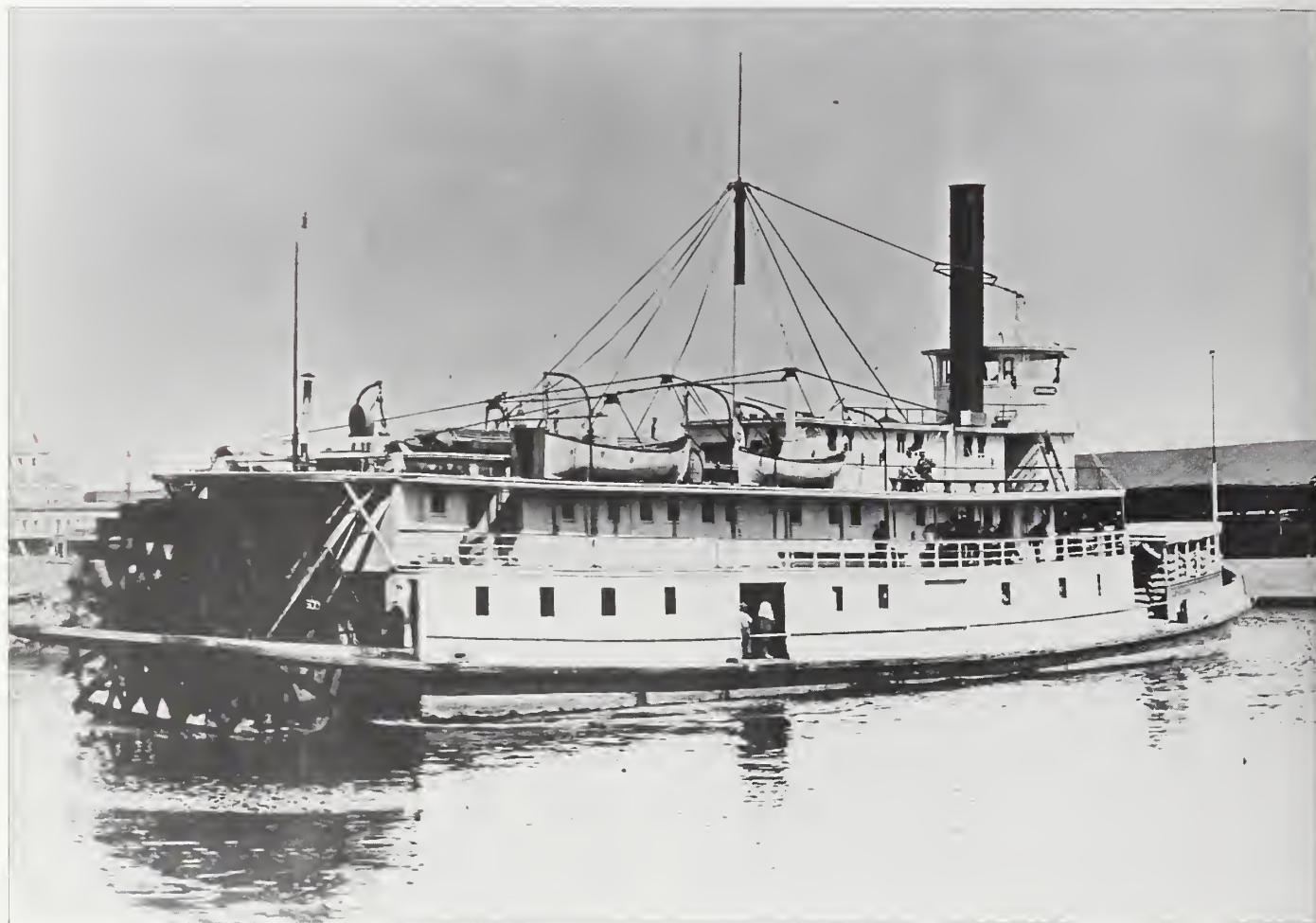
occasional barge-load of crushed rock for levee repair and maintenance.<sup>11</sup>

River transportation in California has been largely regarded as only of passing importance. Conventional wisdom has railroads, and later highways building the Golden State, tying together north and south, mountains and coastline, with bands of steel, concrete, and asphalt. When regarded at all, the steamboat era is depicted as a nostalgic episode, but one with little lasting impact. This is true, if only gross tonnages or total passenger miles are counted. For farmers, merchants, and others living along the banks of streams such as the Mokelumne, however, the whistle of the steamer, whether the shrill squeal of the tiny *Pert* or the melodious blast of the broad-beamed *Onisbo* occasioned excitement, if not celebration. Until the appearance of convenient rail and highway connections, it meant not only that the season's crops would get to market, but also heralded the arrival of visitors, manufactured goods, magazines, newspapers, and other evidence of the world outside the Delta. Today, only pleasure boaters and fishing enthusiasts prowl the lazy waters of the lower Mokelumne. They tie up at wharves that once welcomed sternwheelers, more than likely unaware of the important role the abandoned docks and the vessels that called at them played in California's transportation story.

The story of commercial transportation on the Mokelumne and California's other navigable waterways is documented largely in the archives of the

federal government. The maintenance of rivers for navigation has been the responsibility of the Corps of Engineers. The records of the South Pacific Division of the Corps, headquartered in San Francisco, and contained in the Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, document the surveys made by the army engineers, as well as the work done maintaining the Mokelumne and other streams for navigation by sternwheelers. The evidence gathered to produce the reports and recommendations contained in the published *Annual Reports of the Chief of Engineers* contains a wealth of material on the amount and type of commerce on the river. The records of the South Pacific Division are at the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region in San Bruno, California. The J. Porter Shaw Library of the National Maritime Museum at San Francisco's Fort Mason also holds documentation, including photographs, maps, and plans regarding the transportation companies and steamers that plied the waterways of northern and central California. Applications and complaints in the California State Archives' Public Utilities Commission records, while nominally concerned with freight rates, also reveal a wealth of data on the California Transportation Company, its steamers, staff, facilities, finances, and operations, as well as on other lines serving northern and central California. Also in the State Archives are the incorporation papers of companies that sought to provide river transportation to Californians. The Holt-Atherton Special Collections at Stock-





One of the regulars on the Mokelumne River, the *Constance* was typical of the larger vessels that served towns and farms along its banks during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Accommodations were spartan, and every available square foot of deck space was allotted to cargo.

*Courtesy Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific.*

ton's University of the Pacific library contains the extensive diaries of Delia Locke, Dean Locke's wife. These journals feature perceptive observations regarding life along the Mokelumne and almost daily accounts of her husband's steamboat projects. In addition, photographs, maps, and other materials concerning Jacob Brack and the San Joaquin & Sierra Nevada Railroad can be found in the library and archives of the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. CHS

*See notes beginning on page 105.*

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## THE RECORDS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CALIFORNIA HISTORY

by Richard W. Crawford

Government and politics are an inseparable and inescapable aspect of the American scene. The activities of government, as documented in the public records of local, state, and federal agencies, form a basis for our history, our sense of community, and our understanding of American society and culture. The role of government in our history, and the many ways that the conduct of government reflects the social, cultural, economic, and political conflicts of American people, are also revealed in the papers of public officials and the records of grassroots organizations.

Throughout California—in libraries, halls of records, state and federal archives, courthouses, and historical societies—the records of government offer a window to our past and unmatched documentation of California's heritage. The historic records of San Diego County, many of which are held by the San Diego Historical Society, illustrate the vitality of local government and how research into local government records can yield new insights into history. In August 1877, for example, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors received an earnest petition from forty-six prominent, and angry, San Diegans. The petitioners were irate that public funds had recently been expended on a coroner's inquest that investigated the sudden death of a Native American. In a document that reveals much about contemporary racial attitudes, the petitioners offered several reasons for their formal protest:

- 1st. The Indian died in a perfectly natural way for an Indian.
- 2nd. He was not a citizen or Taxpayer of this state or county.
- 3rd. The United States has exclusive control of Indians, they are not subject to our laws, but are governed by Tribal laws of their own...

The petition concluded by adding that there were two thousand of "this worthless population" in San Diego County and it was not the people's business to "dig up Indians" or inquire into what "particular vice killed them."<sup>1</sup> To the supervisor's credit, the petition was dismissed without comment. The ver-

dict of the county coroner stood: "the Indian," Manuel Olegario, captain of the Luiseno Indians of San Diego's north county, had died from a broken blood vessel and not poisoning as popularly suspected.

In 1965, historian Hugh T. Lefter claimed that "of all the sources used by American historians, local records are the most neglected."<sup>2</sup> However, in the last twenty years, interest in local history and records has undergone a renaissance in popularity. Genealogy (reflecting the "Roots" phenomenon) has become an enduring American pastime, while interest in the restoration of historic buildings and districts continues to grow. Professional historians—long scornful of "antiquarians"—have discovered local public records as the means of interpreting our heritage from the perspective of the common individual, i.e., history from the "bottom up."

Documents such as *Petitions to the Board of Supervisors*, which can be found in most California counties, are certainly the primary source of history "from the bottom up." In the collections of the San Diego Historical Society, hundreds of these documents, including the above petition protesting inquests on Indian deaths, provide key evidence in understanding contemporary problems and concerns. While most petitions are of mundane interest—nominations of individuals for civil office, requests for the repair of a road, applications for reimbursement—sometimes even the most prosaic of documents can be revealing. In December 1887, for example, a petition from an obscure desert community in San Diego's north county cited a "pressing need of telephonic and telegraphic communication with the nearest railroad station," five miles distant from town. The petitioners described their town:

The place is on or near the Desert known as the Colorado Desert—has a Warm Spring—and is becoming a popular winter resort...

The Petitioners are residents or Property Owners of the place known as Palm Springs—formerly known as Agua Caliente...

From such humble beginnings, the town of Palm





Ballena School, San Diego area, ca. late nineteenth century. The history of public education can be researched via the study of local documents.  
*Courtesy San Diego Historical Society, Photograph Collection.*

Springs, California emerged, its origins documented, in part, by local public records.

Local school records, another example of Lefter's "most neglected" records, provide a wealth of contemporary social information. Consider the data found in a "Teacher's Report," a one-page document of twenty-nine "general statistics" questions filed with San Diego County by classroom teachers each year. The standard questionnaire requested information on the grades taught, the number of pupils, the monthly salary of the teacher, the number of volumes in the school library, and more. Fully one-third of the questions addressed the physical needs of the classroom. A typical report from the Santa Maria School District (modern-day Ramona, California) in 1882 demonstrates the rudimentary state of school facilities in the San Diego backcountry:

Q: Is your school provided with sufficient or insufficient apparatus, or wholly without apparatus?

A: *Wholly without.*

Q: Have you an ample supply of good water for your school?

A: *Yes. (If stock is kept out of it.)*

Q: How many water closets? In what condition?

A: *None. (Except provided by nature.)*

Q: What means of ventilation?

A: *Door, windows, cracks, and knot-holes.<sup>4</sup>*

Other school records document the creation of school districts, a process that occasionally met with controversy. In 1896, parents in Hedges, a one-company gold-mining town in the Colorado Desert a few miles northwest of Yuma, Arizona, fought to establish a school over the objections of the mining operators. Officers of the Golden Cross Mining and Milling Company protested the parents' petitions to the county Board of Supervisors, arguing that "none of these people [largely Mexican American laborers] are taxpayers...the Company has no children to educate and is not disposed to pay for a school for the benefit of a floating and changing population such as is peculiar to a mining camp." The Board of Supervisors disagreed and ordered the opening of a schoolhouse in Hedges.<sup>5</sup>

Hedges boomed in the early 1890s as a gold-rush





and San Diego retiree A. G. Spalding contains three cubic feet of depositions concerning the controversial Theosophical Society of Point Loma.<sup>11</sup>

The most dramatic stories found in court-case files are certainly the criminal actions. If San Diego County of the mid-1800s was impoverished—as revealed by civil suits—it was also a violent society, evidenced by the hundreds of criminal actions documented in local District and Superior Court records. Homicide rates in the 1870s exceeded 100 per 100,000—nearly as high as in notorious Bodie, California, which reached 116 homicides per 100,000 in the same period. (In comparison, the current rate for San Diego County is only 5 per 100,000.)<sup>12</sup>

Property disputes precipitated much of the interpersonal violence, particularly in rural areas of the county. In the absence of effective civil authority, individuals tended to mediate their own disputes, often with tragic results. In 1876, for example, a back-country farmer named Royal Barton was sentenced to ten years in San Quentin State Prison for the murder of his neighbor, John Tannahill. District Court case files and justice court dockets show that the two men had quarrelled for years over their property boundaries.<sup>13</sup> San Diego's most violent land feud came in 1888, when an armed posse attempted to eject squatters from a rancher's land near Oceanside. In the gun battle that ensued, four people were shot to death. Three years later, a Superior Court jury acquitted posse leader Archibald Freeman of a murder charge.<sup>14</sup>

Disputes between whites and Native Americans, a tragically recurring theme in San Diego history, is also well documented in judicial records. A San Diego homicide and court action in 1883 would be fictionalized by Helen Hunt Jackson in her classic novel *Ramona* (1884). In the case of *People v. Sam Temple*, witnesses described the death of Juan Diego (Jackson's Alessandro), who allegedly had stolen a horse belonging to Sam Temple (fictionalized as Jim Ferrar). At his court hearing, Temple testified that he had tracked his missing horse to the home of an Indian sheep shearer:

Q: Please state to court the circumstances as nearly as possible attending the killing.

A: I saw my horse picketed in the valley about 40 yds from house...I saw an Ind.[sic] enter the house my impression was that he had seen me and had entered house for the purpose of obtaining arms. I then went down closer to house and halloed hallow[sic]—whereupon the Ind.[sic] made his appearance and came out and when he came up to within 5 or 6 steps of me I asked him whose horse that was and he explained saying it is mine. I asked him where he got him and he explained in San Jacinto advancing upon me all the this time with a knife in his hand. I told him twice to stop. As he did not stop I threw the gun

upon him and pulled trigger but don't think I struck [with] the first shot. He still advanced and I stepped back and shot at him a second time.

Q: How far a distance was you then?

A: About four or five steps as I barely had time to club my gun before he came upon me a second time. I turned the gun and knocked him down and shot him again with my revolver.

Q: Did you see anyone if so state who & where.

A: I saw two squaws on the opposite side of the valley about 150 or 200 yards away. Also saw one squaw coming out the house. I cut my horse loose and left.

The Native Americans who witnessed the shooting, including Juan Diego's wife, were not called in court as witnesses. Justice S. V. Tripp ordered Temple discharged "on the ground of justifiable homicide."<sup>15</sup>

The futility of Native American testimony in the court system occasionally surfaced in case files. In the 1877 justice court hearing, *People v. Pablo, et al.*, three Native Americans stood accused of arson. A Native American woman named Doloras was called to testify for the defense, accompanied by an interpreter. After questioning the woman about her age and livelihood, the defense addressed its major concern:

Q: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

A: She don't know.

Q: Ask her if she knows the obligation of an oath.

A: No. [she does not]

Q: Ask her if she knows the difference between truth and a lie.

A: She knows she will tell no lie.

Q: Suppose you tell the truth what do you expect?

A: She don't know.

At this point the prosecution objected to the witness on the grounds that she seemed "to be ignorant of a God, a Christ, the Obligation of an oath, and every other principal [sic] that binds & directs the conscience of a witness." The court ruled to permit the testimony, adding "[the] testimony is to be taken with the greatest allowance as she being an indian can neither be made to understand any of the obligations binding on the Civilized race."

But the examination of the witness ended with the prosecution declining to cross examine:

for the reason the witness is entirely ignorant of a God, or a Savior & is entirely ignorant of the moral religions or Civil obligations & for the further reason that her answers to the questions ask [ed] her on the examination in court are entirely unintelligible, incoherent, & inappropriate in a judicial inquisition.<sup>16</sup>



# GENERAL STATISTICS.

1. What is the grade of your school?	Primary
2. How many pupils in High School Class?	
3. How many pupils in Grammar Grade?	
4. How many pupils in Primary Grade?	Twenty One
5. How many months have you taught in this School?	Eight
6. Number of school months school has been maintained during present year?	Eight
7. Monthly Salary of teacher?	\$55.48
8. What journals of education have you taken?	
9. Did you attend your County Institute?	Yes-
10. Were you allowed pay for time in attendance?	Yes.
11. Grade and date of your certificate	Life Diploma, April. 1881.
12. Number of school visits made by School Trustees, and average time spent at each visit,	Six - Half hour.
13. Number of school visits made by County Superintendent, and average time spent at each visit,	One - One and a half hour
14. Number of school visits made by other persons,	Thirteen
15. Number of volumes in School Library,	Ten (10)
16. Have you kept the State School Registers as required by law?	Yes-
17. Have you used in school the authorized Series of Text Books?	Yes
18. Have you followed the course of studies prescribed by the Board of Education?	Yes
19. Have you complied with the provisions of Section 1673 of the Political Code?	Yes
20. Have you suitable accommodations in your school house for all pupils who wish to attend?	Yes-
21. Is your school supplied with suitable furniture?	It answers the purpose -
22. Has your school sufficient grounds?	Yes -
23. Are the grounds suitably improved?	No -
24. Is your school provided with sufficient or insufficient apparatus, or wholly without apparatus?	Wholly without
25. Have you an ample supply of good water for your school?	Yes - (if stock is kept out of it.)
26. How many water closets? In what condition?	None - (except provided by Nature)
27. What means of ventilation?	Door, windows, cracks and knotholes.
28. What are the length and breadth of school-room?	L - 20 ft - B - 14 ft -
29. What is the height of the ceiling?	Ten feet -

This "Teachers Report" of the Santa Maria School District (1882) demonstrates the rudimentary state of school facilities.  
Courtesy San Diego Historical Society, Photograph Collection.

The three Native American defendants in this case were bound over to the county grand jury. Eventually they were convicted in San Diego Superior Court.

The value of local public records, suggested by the preceding examples, remains largely unknown by historians. Yet the wealth of these untapped primary sources represents outstanding opportunities for research.

CHS

See notes beginning on page 105.

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## BLACK TELEPHONES AND BLUE DENIM

### Business Archives in California

*by Alison Moore and Lynn Downey*

When historians, archivists, and history buffs in general think about California's past and where it can be found, few consider the wealth of information located in the archives of corporations throughout the state. The majority of researchers expect these business collections to contain materials relating to the narrow focus of a single company. This certainly makes sense; it is the nature of business to be close-mouthed about its operations and its secrets. Corporate collections, however, are filled with vital—and surprising—information that can enhance just about any study of California history.

Men and women found their way to California for a variety of reasons. Once here they were either disillusioned and went quickly home, or they were entranced by the area's special qualities and decided to make a life in the Golden State. As more and more people filled California's borders, businesses arose to provide for their needs.

Business records are as varied and ubiquitous as the individuals and businesses that created them and can be found in corporate archives as well as other types of repositories. Correspondence, ledgers, billheads, invoices, advertising, litigation, oral histories, and architectural drawings are just some of the records that comprise business archives. They reveal information about the creation of the business, how it ran, when times were good or bad and what made them that way, the people at the top and the bottom, how the business fit into its community, and how understanding business history provides a greater understanding of society at large. They include such examples as the diaries of one of the founders of the Hibernia Bank, checks paid to Levi Strauss & Co., and mining company billheads, all found in the California Historical Society; the records of Mason-McDuffie Real Estate Company in the Bancroft Library; federal court cases documenting how San Francisco businesses fared with their insurance companies follow-

ing the 1906 earthquake and fire, which are housed in the regional offices of the National Archives; and the incorporation papers for numerous California businesses in the California State Archives.

The records of companies that survived also reveal what life was like for early Californians and how they were provided with what residents still need today: banking, clothing, communication, food, transportation, household products, news, and shelter, to name a few. California's business archives can tell us much about daily life, political controversy, business rivalry, law, disasters, triumphs, attitudes, socioeconomic conditions, and the transforming power of technology.

Nevertheless, the history of business in California has been much ignored by researchers. There are a number of reasons that explain this oversight, but the one that all business archivists encounter is the most likely: the perception that business records are inexpressibly boring and lack substantive information about anything except the business for which they were created. An examination of materials held by two venerable California companies will change this view.

Let's start with the "humble" telephone. Few businesses in California can claim a more integral relationship to the development of the state—and indeed, the West—than the telecommunications industry. If one thinks for a moment about the extraordinary reach of the telephone—that it is found in homes, businesses, cars, airplanes, purses, briefcases, backpacks, and diaper bags, in large cities and remote towns—it is possible to get a glimmering of the extent to which the development of this business has affected our lives and the history of the state.

Pacific Telephone (now Pacific Telesis) was incorporated on December 31, 1906. The company, through its immediate predecessor companies,



The first transcontinental telephone call was made from the Pacific Telephone office at 333 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, to President Woodrow Wilson in Washington, D.C., January 25, 1915. Pictured from left to right: G.E. MacFarland, president of Pacific Telephone and Telegraph; C.C. Moore, president, Panama Pacific International Exposition; Thomas Watson, former assistant to Alexander Graham Bell; H.I. Scott, chairman of the board, PT&T; James Rolph, mayor of San Francisco; and Thomas Doolittle, formerly of AT&T. Also listening in on the line in New York was Alexander Graham Bell, whose portrait hangs on the wall.

*Courtesy Pacific Bell Archives.*

began doing business in San Francisco in 1877, only one year after the invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell. The first San Francisco phone directory was published by the American Speaking Telephone Co. in 1878. In 1880, Pacific's predecessor companies allied, becoming part of the national Bell System and remaining so until the court-ordered breakup of the Bell System in 1984. Since 1984, Pacific Bell, under the corporate umbrella of Pacific Telesis, has operated as an independent company in California and Nevada. Prior to its

breakup, the national Bell System was the largest private employer in the world. Historically, Pacific Telephone/Pacific Bell has been the largest non-governmental employer in California. Until 1961, Pacific also encompassed Oregon, Washington, and northern Idaho.

As a key player in California's business history, Pacific's past is multi-faceted: because of the far-reaching nature of telephony geographically, the company has been a part of the development of hundreds of towns and cities in the West. It was an early



employer of women and minorities; it has accomplished feats of engineering, from Puget Sound to Catalina Island, unprecedented in any other business; and company records have charted most natural disasters in the far West since the San Francisco earthquake and fire in 1906. In addition, Pacific Telephone provided sole telecommunications services for the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, the 1915 California Pacific International Exposition in San Diego, the founding and first meeting of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945, and countless other events.

Keeping this in mind, one can see how a study of Pacific Bell reveals much about politics and social

life in California. For example, the following rhyme, printed in *Pacific Telephone Magazine* in 1909, is a revealing example of the ways telephones were changing the nature of daily domestic life in the early twentieth century.

#### THE NEW MOTHER HUBBARD

The new Mother Hubbard,  
Instead of the cupboard,  
Went to the telephone;  
And she said, "Hello!"  
This is so-and-so,  
Please send a five-cent bone!'

In that same year, operators at the Franklin



During World War I, a group of Pacific Telephone operators participated in a Liberty Loan Parade, April 6, 1918, in San Francisco prior to their departure for France to join the Signal Corps. The figure portrayed on horseback is Joan of Arc. *Pacific Telephone Magazine* described the scene as, "linking the present with the past, symbolizing the spirit and loyalty of women in the struggle for the triumph of the right."

Courtesy Pacific Bell Archives.

Lu Kum Shu, manager, and staff operators stand in front of Pacific Telephone's Chinatown Exchange at 843 Washington Street, San Francisco, ca. 1917. From left to right: Lu Kum Shu, Lilly Loo, Grace Wong Lai, Gun Chow, Lee Chan, and Myrtle Loo. *Courtesy Pacific Bell Archives.*



Exchange, San Francisco, were polled about "peculiar questions asked by subscribers." Here are some of their answers:

"There are extras out about a big fire in Los Angeles—can you tell me about it?"

"Can you tell me in how many minutes I can reach the Ferry from Union and Hyde streets, via Union St. car line?"

"Is Abe Ruef married?"<sup>2</sup>

In the realm of politics, for example, the records of Pacific Telephone between 1910 and 1920 provide an excellent case study of the ways local and state governments nationwide attempted to municipalize public utilities in order to control rates, profits, and competition. In San Francisco and Los Angeles, city governments failed in these attempts; however, the era did produce the California Railroad Commission, the predecessor to the California Public Utilities Commission.

A unique relationship between Pacific Telephone and San Francisco's Chinese community is also found in the records of the company's Chinatown Exchange, which was in service from 1894 to 1949 and was staffed continuously by Chinese employees. Records show that the company engaged in—

and even touted—a business relationship with a group virtually shunned by most of mainstream society. Indeed, in the days following the 1906 earthquake and fire, Pacific Telephone board member Louis Glass (later indicted for his role in the "Boss" Ruef scandal) made room available in his own home for Chinatown Exchange manager Lu Kum Shu and other family members, when fire destroyed the Exchange and Kum Shu's home above it.

Pacific Bell has also played a significant role in developing the architectural landscape of cities and towns throughout its territory. Hundreds of buildings of all sizes and designs built by the company in the last one hundred years still dot the landscape. In 1925 alone, the company completed the construction of twenty-six central offices, each one designed to correspond to the dominant architecture around it. In the Pacific Northwest, buildings followed the Craftsman style prevalent in Seattle and Portland. In Los Angeles, Mission Revival style offices were constructed.

Also in 1925, the company completed its new corporate headquarters in San Francisco, designed by famed architect Timothy Pflueger. Pflueger, also the architect for such well-known buildings as the Pacific Coast Stock Exchange, Oakland's Paramount The-



ater, and the (former) I. Magnin building, as well as San Francisco's Union Square, broke with tradition when he designed the "Telephone Building," at 140 New Montgomery Street. The first skyscraper built in San Francisco, the twenty-six-story building celebrated its height with a uniquely vertical design inspired by the granite cliffs above Fallen Leaf Lake in the Sierra. To achieve a granite-like appearance, Pflueger used terra-cotta tile with a granite finish manufactured by the renowned California firm of Gladding, McBean & Company. Built by Lindgren and Swinerton (now Swinerton and Walberg), the building was completed in fourteen months. In 1929, one month before the crash of the stock market, Winston Churchill visited the building while touring California. Writing later to Pacific Telephone & Telegraph President H.D. Pillsbury, Churchill thanked him for the tour of "your immense building."<sup>1</sup> Until the 1970s the Telephone Building stood alone in its South-of-Market neighborhood, a landmark for many generations. Today it provides a stately backdrop for San Francisco's new Museum of Modern Art, built by none other than Swinerton and Walberg.

At their core, Pacific's records illuminate the personal histories of individuals. Some are corporate leaders resisting municipal control; others are pioneers such as Lu Kum Shu, the Chinese newspaper owner who deftly crafted an unprecedented business relationship in San Francisco's Chinatown, and Jo Fasciona, the first woman to rise through the ranks to become a company officer.

**L**evi Strauss, the Bavarian dry-goods merchant who helped invent the blue jean that bears his name, started a small business in nineteenth-century San Francisco that today is the world's largest clothing manufacturer. The Levi Strauss & Co. (LS&CO.) Archives in San Francisco comprises a variety of items (clothing, marketing materials, posters, artifacts, photographs, and documents) that illustrate the company's long history, though not all of it. The earthquake and fire of 1906 destroyed LS&CO.'s headquarters, factory, and entire wholesale inventory. What remains, and what has since been acquired, reveals another side of California and western life.

What people wear and what clothing manufacturers make for them provide unique insights into social history. In 1873 LS&CO. began manufacturing riveted, denim jeans (known in the old days as "waist overalls") for cowboys, miners, lumberjacks, and other working men. Smaller versions of this garment (as well as the denim jacket to wear with



In 1850, the German-born merchant Levi Strauss (1830-1902) came to San Francisco, where he established Levi Strauss & Co., a family-run firm that is now the world's largest clothing manufacturer.  
*Courtesy Levi Strauss & Co. Archives.*

it) were made for these laborers' sons. However, while LS&CO. continued to produce an all-male product line until well into the twentieth century, sweeping changes were happening in the lives of American women, and the company had to make a few of its own in order to keep up.

Feminists had tried to free women from the cultural bonds that kept them in the home and out of society's mainstream throughout the nineteenth century. These bonds were personified by the tight and restrictive clothing that husbands, ministers, and clothing manufacturers insisted was the only proper attire for women, especially those of the urban middle and upper classes. Attempts to change this attitude emerged sporadically in the nineteenth century; health reformers such as J.H. Kellogg, for example, spoke out against the corset and the horrible, often permanent, damage it inflicted on women's bodies. In 1851 Amelia Bloomer created the pantaloonskirt outfit that bore her name, though even the lion-hearted Susan B. Anthony could not handle the ridicule she received when she wore the bloomer costume to her many suffrage lectures. In later years



#### COSTUME COMPRISES

200 Misses' Hat      7501 ' Misses' Waist  
5029 Misses' Breeches

The turn of the century marked many changes for American women. This page from a late-nineteenth-century Levi Strauss & Co. catalog reflects the transition of women's attire from restrictive to active. Levi Strauss & Co. played a significant role in the development and manufacture of such liberating attire.

*Courtesy Levi Strauss & Co. Archives.*

educators fought for women's health by preaching the value of physical education for young girls and women, and how clothing aided or impeded such activities.

The years marking America's entry into World

War I, and the many ways women were able to participate, from making bandages to driving ambulances, weakened the objections to clothing reform that had defined the previous century. Manufacturers took the hint and began to offer garments that reflected women's new participation in society, and Levi Strauss & Co. was no exception.

The first product the company made for women was a loose-fitting garment called "Freedom-Alls," intended to be worn both for housework and for recreation. The very existence of this garment implied that housework was no longer the day-long drudge it had been, and that women were finding their way out of the home and into the world. Another name for this product was the "Liberty Suit," and its patent date, 1918, reflects the patriotic rhetoric of victory during America's involvement in World War I, as well as the personal freedoms being won by women as they challenged the prevailing social order. These changes were obvious enough that they were discussed in sociological studies of the following decade.

Robert and Helen Lynd, in their famous pioneering work, *Middletown*, reported that

The substantial...housewife of today does her morning housework in a light, loose-fitting, short-sleeved wash dress; in 1890, even in summer, she wore a shirtwaist with a high collar and long sleeves, and a wool skirt over a flannel petticoat, with a broken whalebone in her second-best corset gouging her somewhere down underneath all these clothes.<sup>4</sup>

Clothing reform was slowly being accepted, social scientists observed, though it was still necessary to remind women of the deleterious effects of restrictive garments in the second decade of this century:

A woman or girl can never expect to be really well if her clothing is habitually tight on any part of her body...Freedom of motion for all the muscles of the body is nature's requirement.<sup>5</sup>

By 1920, women had won the vote in every state in the Union, and the rules for women and their clothing melted away at an unheard-of rate. At the same time, as fewer middle-class women made clothing at home, manufacturers began offering a wide range of garments suitable for everyday life. This was yet another trend considered significant enough to be discussed in everything from newspapers to textbooks. One 1925 guide to women's clothing advised that "for the busy woman who cannot afford the time to select material and plan garments, buying clothing ready-made is an easy solution of the problem of dress. This is its great



advantage."<sup>6</sup> What kept these women so busy that they could not sew their clothing any more? A variety of things, including attending meetings at the many local women's clubs, working as clerks in offices, or following one of a number of new avenues now open to women.

One serious liability of the ready-made clothing industry was the "sweatshop" system, in which garments were made or finished by women and children working in their homes. Those who worked within this system were among the poorest members of society; their home conditions were often unsanitary and the working hours long. The early twentieth century saw many attempts to reform this practice, and forward-thinking women were urged to consider the origin of their clothing. Levi Strauss & Co. was aware of the scrutiny that manufactured clothing received, and went out of its way to inform customers that its garments were free of the taint of the sweatshop. The earliest catalog held by the company archives contains the following statement, printed boldly on the first page: "All Made In Our Own Factory, Where Only Women And Girl Operators Are Employed."<sup>7</sup>

By the 1920s, women were not only moving out into the world, they were moving outdoors. Spending the day on a leisurely hike was a popular activity in the West, and proper garments were an essential component of this experience. Again, Levi Strauss & Co. kept an eye on the changing world of its western customers and created clothing suitable for the New Woman and her new lifestyle. In 1922, a special price list was issued to LS&CO.'s wholesale customers, mercantile and small clothing stores throughout the West. "Are You Prepared?" is printed in bold characters on the cover, and when opened, the question continues, "for the big Ladies' Hiking 'Tog' business this Spring and Summer?"<sup>8</sup> Inside is depicted a variety of loose-fitting, outdoor garments for women, featuring photographs of well-fed women looking as though they are ready to jump on a San Francisco Bay ferryboat for a day on Mt. Tamalpais. While LS&CO. did not invent the knickerbockers and the accessories seen in this catalog, the inclusion of these garments in its normal product line shows that Levi Strauss & Co. was responsive to customers and not bound by the past in its seasonal offerings.

Company catalogs indicate that management kept an eye on trends in women's clothing, seen most strikingly in the introduction of "Lady Levi's" in 1935, a women's version of the traditional waist overalls. This was a response to western women who had for decades donned their husbands', fathers',

and brothers' overalls to work on family ranches. These catalogs and the marketing materials that were given to retailers for in-store advertising reveal that the company had the know-how to create and keep a customer base, even in times of economic downturn.

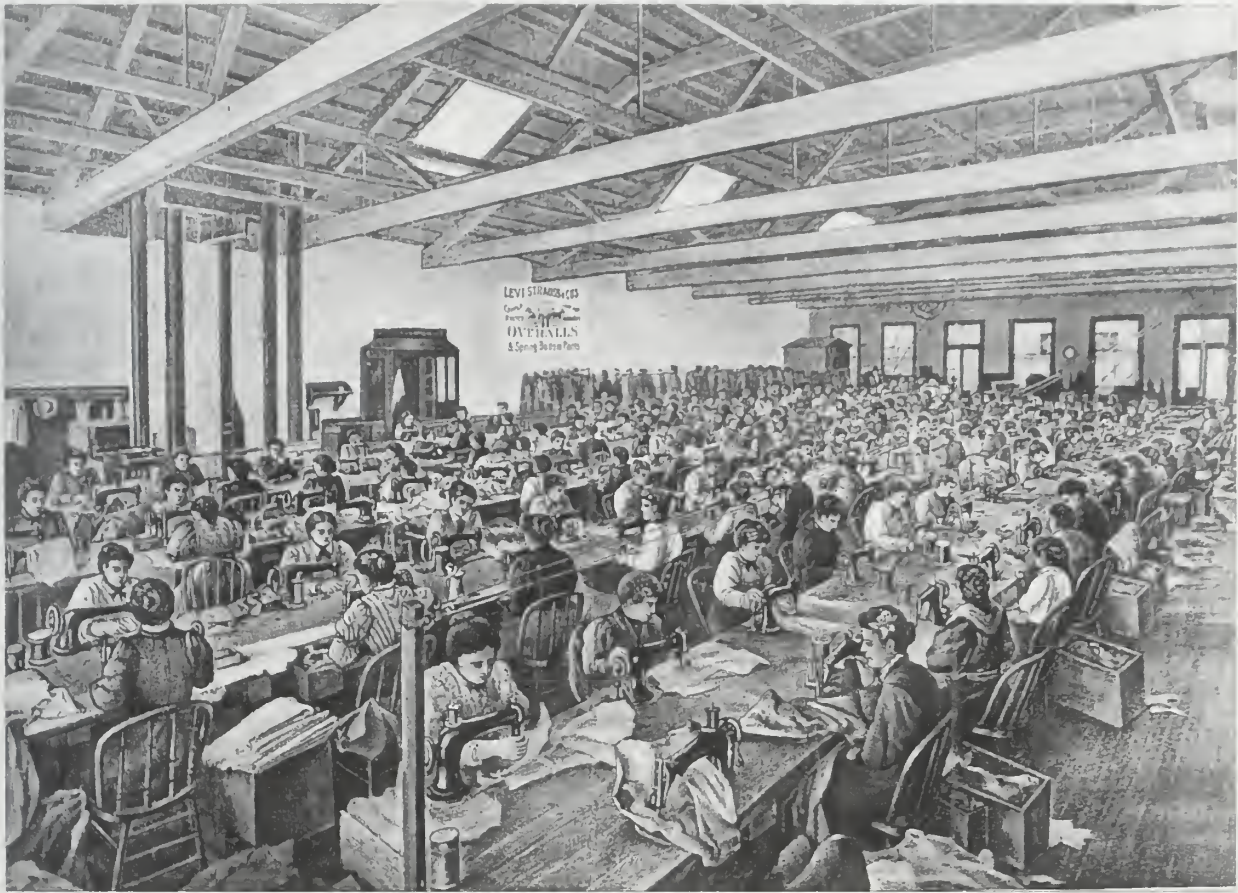
Historians of American costume generally view Levi Strauss & Co. as a company primarily involved in manufacturing men's clothing. However, the materials on women's clothing held by the LS&CO. Archives shatter this perception, at the same time adding a new dimension to discussions of women's costume and women's social history in America.

Levi Strauss & Co. and Pacific Telesis are only two of the numerous corporate archives in the Golden State. There are many more, including collections held by AMGEN (Thousand Oaks), Walt Disney Co. (Burbank), Wells Fargo Bank (San Francisco), Bank of America (San Francisco), the Los Angeles Dodgers (Los Angeles), Charles Schwab (San Francisco), Del Monte Foods (San Francisco), Blue Cross of California (Woodland Hills), RKO Pictures (Los Angeles), Sun-Diamond Growers (Stockton), and Hewlett Packard Company (Palo Alto), to name a few. Corporate archives and business records may be held by the company that created them or by another archival repository such as a historical society, library, or museum. The diversity of these holdings and the breadth of their information make corporate collections particularly valuable to any comprehensive study of life in California.

Calvin Coolidge once said that "the business of America is business." It can also be said that the businesses of California, and particularly the records they have created, provide significant documentation for most aspects of California life. Where else can you find predictions of the future, such as in the following item from a 1919 *Pacific Telephone Magazine*?

And all this is nothing compared to the rumors that are going the rounds—that we shall shortly be fitted with pocket wireless telephones, with which we can call up Charlie Chaplin or Lloyd George. Think of going to the movies then! In the most thrilling quarter of the eighth massive part, just when the lights are down and only a green spot follows the villain as he creeps across the hearthrug to his victim—and trips headlong over his trusty bulldog—just then there is a tinkle in our waistcoat pocket and a voice from another world shrills: "Come home at once, John. The furnace fire has gone out."<sup>9</sup>

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Like many ready-made clothing factories of the early twentieth century, Levi Strauss & Co. employed many girls and women. Such factories were often justly accused of being unsafe and unsanitary. Levi Strauss & Co. was sensitive to the importance of this type of public concern and went out of its way to inform customers that its garments were free of the taint of the sweatshop.

*Courtesy Levi Strauss & Co. Archives.*

*See notes beginning on page 106.*

Alison Moore is a Bay Area archivist who received her B.A. (American History) and M.L.I.S. from UC Berkeley. She has worked at both the Bancroft Library, where she cataloged the papers of California writer William Saroyan, and the California Historical Society, where she processed the papers of San Francisco Mayor James Rolph. She has worked in the archives at Levi Strauss & Co., and is currently developing a museum for Pacific Bell's landmark corporate headquarters, which will highlight the contributions of women and minorities, among others, in helping to build the telecommunications infrastructure in California. She is also a contributor to a forthcoming educational video disk on the history of California.

Lynn Downey is a native Californian writer and archivist. Her work has appeared in *The Pacific Historian*, *Ceramics Monthly*, *Flash Point*, *The Californians*, and *The San Francisco Chronicle*. She is also the editor and co-author of *Catalina Tile of the Magic Isle*. She has a bachelor's degree in history from San Francisco State University and a master's degree in library/information science from the University of California, Berkeley, and has worked with archival collections at the Bancroft Library, the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center, and Mason-McDuffie Real Estate. She currently serves as the historian for Levi Strauss & Co. in San Francisco, and is president of the Society of California Archivists during the 1995-1996 term.



## ON THE ARCHIVAL TRAIL OF THE CIO AND HOLLYWOOD'S LABOR WARS

by Sarah Cooper

### *The Spirit of the CIO*

The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) blazed through America's mid-century (1935-1955) galvanizing workers like no other mass labor organization had done before or has done since. When the American Federation of Labor (AFL) expelled John L. Lewis and his industrial organizing committee in the struggle over when and how to unionize workers in mass production industries, the CIO was born. By the end of 1937, the CIO claimed a membership of 3,700,000, surpassing the AFL by 300,000.<sup>1</sup>

The story of the CIO continues to attract and engage labor historians who research and write about its various identities: as a national labor organization, a vehicle for workers' control on the job, a force for interracial progress, a political battlefield for the American Left, Right, and Center in the Cold War, and, in its earliest and simplest identity, as a grassroots local movement for workers' economic well-being and civil rights.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the abundant and growing scholarship on CIO topics, the history of the California CIO and its local councils has been relatively unexamined and remains fertile ground for exploration.<sup>3</sup> Inspiring, controversial, colorful, and at times tragic, the story of the CIO in California has more opportunity to be told now because of two developments in the archival field: more CIO records have come to light and been organized for research, and more oral histories with CIO participants have been recorded, transcribed, and made available.

For a sense of the rank-and-file labor movement in California during the late 1930s and early 1940s, oral history sources are particularly valuable. For example, Jim Daugherty, a utility workers' organizer and later president of the California CIO, describes

in a 1991 interview by the UCLA Oral History Program, how grassroots organizers built the CIO from the bottom up. Daugherty provides an account of the "dawn patrol," a roving band of organizers that included Daugherty, Philip "Slim" (he weighed about three hundred pounds) Connelly, head of the CIO's Los Angeles Industrial Council, and autoworkers' organizer Lew Michener:

The Dawn Patrol was just a loose, unappointed, unaffiliated group of CIO officials, CIO members from the various plants and so forth, that we could call upon and notify that on a certain morning or on a certain date we were going to concentrate in an attempt to organize a certain plant in a certain area... they'd just meet at that plant, rank-and-file workers and officers, and we would contact the workers coming to [the plant], and if it happened to be a round-the-clock operation, we would stay and not only get the people going on the shift but we would stay and get the people who were coming off the shift. We'd talk organization to them and always had a supply of universal CIO cards that didn't particularly always say what particular group it would eventually end up in. And we didn't care. All we wanted to do was to see that they were organized. If we were successful in getting an organizing campaign started at a plant, then we would sit down and say, "Well, logically, this type of work should go into the Steelworkers" or "This type of work should go into the [United] Furniture Workers [of America]" or "This should go into the Amalgamated Clothing Workers." We didn't care where they went as long as they got organized...<sup>4</sup>

By 1939, through the efforts of people like Daugherty and Connelly, the Los Angeles Industrial Union Council had a membership of about fifty thousand workers, affiliated through sixty different unions.<sup>5</sup>



CIO Labor Day float, 1941.  
 Courtesy Hearst Newspaper Collection, Special Collections,  
 University of Southern California Library.

The grassroots spirit of the dawn patrol described by Daugherty is also evident in the rank-and-file papers and flyers issued in the same era. These ephemera, generated on an almost daily basis during strikes, are part of the archival record as much as the official minutes, proceedings, and publications of the CIO. They give a real flavor of the labor experience of the period on the docks, in factories, and on the picket line.

For example, the mimeographed *Harbor Unity* of December 7, 1937, describes itself as a "rank and file publication...to create unity among the trade unions in the Los Angeles Harbor Area whether A.F.L. or C.I.O. or independent." It exhorts union men to

smoke union cigars, to attend a labor class Tuesday evenings in San Pedro, and to read Leo Huberman's *The Labor Spy Racket*, which was about the La Follette Committee investigations. A *Unity* slogan, "the pen is mightier than the beef squad" printed on the flyer, and the caption "the brotherhood of goons," which appeared under a sketch of rats scrambling aboard a ship, refer to the ILWU's jurisdictional dispute with the teamsters over organizing workers at the harbor.

During the CIO organizing drive in the southern California aircraft industry, CIO partisans were also busy generating their own version of the ensuing labor battle. Following a four-day sit-down strike in late February at Douglas Aircraft Company, the



United Auto Workers—CIO, began publishing a strike newspaper entitled *Plane Facts*. The daily paper contained commentary on the continuing strike, news from the gigantic CIO organizing drive in the auto industry in Michigan, anti-business cartoons, and ads from cafes, barbers, and boot shops in the Ocean Park neighborhood of Santa Monica, near the Douglas plant.<sup>8</sup>

With the emergence of aircraft, auto, and steel plants in southern California and the mass union organizing drives that accompanied them, Los Angeles became a kind of west coast Detroit. And, like Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Akron, the face of Los Angeles and the fate of its workforce in these industries, which had been organized by the CIO in the 1930s, was inalterably changed when a wave of auto, steel, and rubber plant closings decimated the Midwest in the 1970s and crested in southeast Los Angeles in the early 1980s.<sup>9</sup>

Oral histories taken from the men and women who helped organize these plants in the 1930s, and the lively, opinionated leaflets and strike papers they created at the time, some now preserved in archival collections, are testament to the militant and hopeful spirit of the early CIO in California.

### *A Hollywood Story*

The labor history of the film industry also illustrates new research opportunities and the value of archives. In 1945 and 1946, workers on strike in Hollywood, like the sit-down strikers had done in the 1930s in aircraft and auto industry organizing drives, cranked up mimeo machines on a daily basis to circulate their own bulletins. This time, the conflict was an epic struggle involving powerful Hollywood producers, thousands of workers, and two rivals for the leadership of the labor movement in Hollywood, the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) and the Conference of Studio Unions (CSU).

September 1946 marked the third and last CSU strike within two years. It pitted the rank-and-file labor federation, the CSU, led by the militant organizer Herb Sorrell, against IATSE, which had been Mafia-dominated in the 1930s and was now led by anti-Communist crusader Roy Brewer. Picket assignments, news of altercations with police on the line, and reports from CSU delegations to other unions are among the short pieces in the CSU's daily mimeographed news bulletin, *The Picket Line*. The writers

constantly castigated Brewer and Richard Walsh, the international president of IATSE and a holdover from the Mafia era, and routinely reported on the struggle to gain the support of other unions.<sup>10</sup>

The CSU, as in previous strikes, lobbied the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), not just to remain neutral in the conflict with IATSE, but to honor CSU picket lines. An October *Picket Line* reported on recent remarks about the strike made by Ronald Reagan, an executive board member of SAG. Under the subheading "Reagan Impartial?" the CSU writer faulted Reagan for his criticism of the CSU and for portraying the Mafia-tainted Walsh as "an honest labor leader."<sup>11</sup> In late 1946, the SAG membership, persuaded by Reagan, Robert Montgomery, George Murphy and others in the union's leadership, voted to cross CSU picket lines.<sup>12</sup> Communist influence within the CSU, as much as the grievances of the set- and prop-builders (which had been the specific impetus for the strike), had become a major issue in the dispute.

The last battle of the CSU was, in some respects, the end of the struggle for a democratic labor movement in Hollywood and the prelude to the blacklist that would soon permeate the entire film industry. In 1947, the studio heads who allied themselves with IATSE against the CSU issued the infamous "Waldorf Statement," which denied employment to communists and pledged to "eliminate any subversives" in their studios.<sup>13</sup> Reagan, by then president of SAG, became increasingly involved in the anti-communist fervor in the motion picture industry.

On the eve of the September 1946 CSU strike, however, Reagan was still working politically with people from the Left. In one of the last vestiges of the Left-liberal alliance from the World War II era, he lent a hand to Mobilization for Democracy (MFD), a Los Angeles coalition dedicated to continuing the fight against fascism by organizing against American racist and anti-Semitic groups like the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>14</sup> Garnering citywide support from progressive, Jewish, and African American organizations, the MFD carried on the work of the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, an ambitious, anti-fascist educational project of the Screen Writers Guild.<sup>15</sup>

Among the members of the executive board of Mobilization for Democracy were several prominent activists who would continue to be deeply engaged with liberal/Left politics as Reagan headed toward the Right. These leaders included Carey McWilliams, California civil-rights activist and author; Charlotta



Union members on the  
sit-down strike at  
Douglas Aircraft,  
ca. 1937.

*Courtesy Hearst Newspaper  
Collection, Special Collections,  
University of Southern  
California Library.*

Bass, crusading editor of the Los Angeles African American newspaper *The California Eagle* (and in 1952, vice presidential candidate on the Progressive Party ticket); Phil Connelly, head of the Los Angeles Industrial Union Council and subsequently one of the defendants in the Smith Act indictments against the leadership of the California Communist Party; John McTernan, a renowned civil-liberties attorney whose later defense of individuals prosecuted by the

Smith Act and other anti-communist laws would help bring an end to their use against activists; and California Assemblyman Augustus Hawkins, who went on to have a long and distinguished career as a liberal U.S. congressman.

In a letter to the Los Angeles community, Robert W. Kenny, honorary chairman for Mobilization for Democracy, explained that the organization would kick off a thirteen-week series of radio programs on



KLAC beginning on September 9 to "expose, in dramatic manner, the activities of some of America's lynch terrorists, anti-Semites and hate-breeders."<sup>17</sup> Enlisting "outstanding Hollywood talent through the cooperation of the Hollywood Writers Mobilization," the series was called "It Is Happening Here." Kenny, a prominent lawyer, judge, and former California attorney general, was the special on-air guest for the premiere broadcast, which warned about the perils of domestic fascism by dramatizing Klan incidents in Georgia and Los Angeles. Kenny was in the company of several actors for the broadcast, but the opening of the program made clear who was the star: "The Mobilization for Democracy presents: Ronald Reagan in 'Operation Terror.'"<sup>18</sup>

Reagan and Kenny shared the limelight again a year later, in October 1947. This time it was not a radio show, but the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) hearings investigating communist influence in the motion picture industry.<sup>19</sup> Reagan, then president of his union, appeared as a "friendly witness" expressing deep concern about communist infiltration in Hollywood. Kenny was there as counsel for the screenwriters and directors (and one producer) known as the "Hollywood Ten," men who would end up in prison for their defiance of HUAC. The Left-liberal alliance in Hollywood represented by Mobilization for Democracy had been shattered. No longer joined in the anti-fascist cause, Reagan and Kenny had taken up their respective sides in the long Cold War to come.

### *Researching the California CIO*

There are CIO records in several Bay Area archives. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, has the San Francisco CIO Council records. The Anne Rand Library of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union in San Francisco holds substantial material because longtime ILWU leader Harry Bridges was also regional director of the CIO. The Labor Archives and Research Center at San Francisco State University has, among other pertinent collections, *The Labor Herald* (the California CIO newspaper) and files from labor lawyer Norman Leonard, who represented the ILWU and many other CIO unions. Oral histories conducted by the Bancroft's Regional Oral History Office with Leonard and with Lou Goldblatt, ILWU leader and secretary-treasurer of the California CIO, 1938–1942, are

among the labor interviews available at the Bancroft that are potentially useful for CIO research.

In southern California, the Urban Archives Center at California State University, Northridge, has a substantive body of Los Angeles and California CIO records within its Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO Collection. Files of Philip "Slim" Connelly, secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles Industrial Union Council and president of the California CIO, are particularly rich for pursuing the internal and external battles of the CIO in Los Angeles and the state. The center also contains historical materials relating to a number of other labor organizations, as well as individuals active in unions. Proceedings, minutes, and correspondence on the California and Los Angeles CIO can be found at the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research in Los Angeles. Jim Daugherty donated much of the CIO material now at the library, salvaging it from the old CIO building in south-central Los Angeles after the merger of the AFL with the CIO.

Several interviews conducted by the UCLA Oral History Program are a gold mine for CIO research. In addition to an interview with Daugherty, they include Ben Dobbs, labor secretary for the Communist Party in Los Angeles; Dorothy Healey, long-time head of the party in southern California; and civil-liberties attorney Ben Margolis, who represented or worked with many CIO people and was counsel for the Hollywood Ten. Interviews with John Allard, Len De Caux, Henry Fiering, and Wyndham Mortimer are also pertinent sources. Researchers have access to the interview transcripts through the UCLA Department of Special Collections.

### *Researching the Hollywood Studio Strikes, 1945–1946*

The Margaret Herrick Library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Library in Beverly Hills and the Cinema/Television Library at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles are two motion picture history archives that must be consulted. General subject files and biography files at the academy contain clippings on the strike and its participants. The Warner Bros. Archives and the Jack L. Warner Papers at USC are other important sources for research on the strike. The papers of and interviews with CSU leader Herbert K. Sorrell at UCLA Special Collections and the Hollywood Stu-

Ronald Reagan and an unidentified actor at the KLAC Mobilization for Democracy broadcast, September, 9, 1946. This broadcast also starred former Attorney General Robert W. Kenny. The Mobilization for Democracy (MFD) was a Los Angeles coalition of liberal groups dedicated to continuing the fight against fascism by organizing against American racist and anti-Semitic groups like the Ku Klux Klan.

*Photo by Ben Polin, courtesy Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.*



dio Strike Collection at the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research provide the CSU perspective.

The rise of the CIO and the Hollywood labor wars are but two examples of the rich labor history of California that invite new research and scholarship. The change of leadership at the AFL-CIO in 1995, and the steady expansion of organizing among immigrant workers in California, challenge labor historians to interpret and reinterpret our nation's and state's labor history. An expanding body of archival documentation on California labor, especially new oral history sources, promises to make that challenge a rewarding one.

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*See notes beginning on page 106.*

Since 1983, Sarah Cooper has been director of the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, which documents the history of labor, the Left, women, people of color, gays and lesbians, and other grassroots movements for social justice in southern California. She was previously the field archivist for the Social Action Collection at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. In 1990 she was honored as the first recipient of the Archivist Award of Excellence.



# POLLUTION, PRODUCTION, AND POWER

## Natural Resources, Society, and Technology

by Waverly B. Lowell

As industrialism during the past two centuries moved civilization "forward" through the use of natural resources, it paid little attention to the effect it might have on the natural environment and the quality of life it supported. In fact, in many people's minds, there was little difference between the environment and the resources and opportunities it provided. California, past, present, and future, is inseparable from the landscape that forms its dreams and development. Industry and agriculture were both formed by and formed from the environment that is California.

The range of research about the environment that can be conducted in the state's archival collections is limited only by the imagination. Individuals, corporations, governments, and communities created and kept records, photographs, maps, reports, letters, and other primary sources that reveal the impact that mining, farming, shipping, logging, ranching, railroads, and urban sprawl have had on the ecosystems that surround us.

Water, in particular, has always played a significant part in the western landscape. The seductive and stormy role that water has played in California's relationship with the land is revealed by many archival collections throughout the state. Numerous archival repositories hold collections related to hydraulic mining and power, agricultural irrigation, and the use of technology to build dams, manage water use, and move water to the places that have the money and power to control it. Because much of the jurisdiction over public waterways and public lands lies with the federal government, a great deal of the documentation related to the environment and water use in California can be found in the records of the National Archives regional offices, particularly in the records of the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. district courts and circuit courts of appeal.

No one today would be surprised to read a headline shouting *State of Nevada sues California company for polluting water supply*. What is surprising is that in this instance, it was in 1904 that the state of Nevada sued the Floriston Pulp and Paper Company

for dumping chemicals into the Truckee River. Essentially, the dominant contemporary values involved in developing the natural resources of this country were values that contained little regard for the environment. These values were supported by the language of law, property values, and enterprise.<sup>1</sup> Lawmakers in the West "confronted the problems of the environment in a marketplace context,"<sup>2</sup> and litigants seldom sued to stop the environmental devastation, given the pro-industry judicial opinions of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> In fact, there are numerous cases of environmental litigation, such as the 1904 Nevada case, appearing in the historical records of the federal courts. These legal case files illustrate that environmental conflicts and issues were common in the developing West regardless of the judicial outcome.

The affidavits, supporting documents, and exhibit materials found in these case files provide information about land and water use, contemporary science and technology, and competing economic interests, as well as the changes they caused to the environment. The case of *The State of Nevada v. Floriston Pulp and Paper Company*—the records of which may be found at the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, in San Bruno—concerned the pollution of the Truckee River, which flows from California across the Nevada state border near Reno. This case had been brought by the state of Nevada because public lands, agricultural stations, the state university at Reno, and other public institutions depended on and benefited from clean water from the Truckee River (see fig. 1).

The state charged Floriston Pulp and Paper, a California company, with "allowing large quantities of chemicals and acids to percolate and seep through the bottom and sides of a reservoir into the Truckee River." Furthermore, the state alleged that these

substances and acids pollute the waters of the river... above the points where the waters are diverted for the purposes of supplying the City of Reno and the state of Nevada with water for drinking and domestic purposes. . . [and] that said water becomes and has become disgusting to the sight, disagreeable to the taste, and injurious to the health and renders the



Figure 1. View of the Floriston Pulp and Paper Company mill beside the Truckee River, 1904. An important link between the Lake Tahoe watershed and western Nevada, the Truckee has for more than a century been a battleground of environmental controversy including one over the Floriston Company's dumping of pollutants into the river.  
*Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.*

same unfit for either drinking or any other domestic purpose and injurious to all vegetation and cultivation of all agricultural products and destructive to the said fish and injurious to those it does not destroy (see fig. 2).<sup>4</sup>

According to the complaint, prior to the mill's operation, the Truckee had "always been a large perennial stream from its head to its mouth of pure, fresh water singularly wholesome, healthful for drinking and in every way adapted to all domestic purposes and for irrigating lands...for agriculture."<sup>5</sup>

As in most litigation, the defendant's response to the complaint denied most of the allegations and disagreed on other points. Floriston's lawyers explained that pollution had existed prior to the mill's establishment and did not necessarily result from manufacturing. Floriston denied the above description of the Truckee and averred that "the said river for many years past, and before the mills or works of this defendant were constructed, was and has been constantly polluted by sewerage and other offensive matter flowing and passing into the same from the town of Truckee and other towns situated along and near to its banks, and also from houses, dairies, barns and stables."<sup>6</sup> However, in a somewhat contradictory

message, a photograph album provided as evidence by the defense to prove that *they* had not polluted the already-damaged river contained images of lush foliage along the banks.

The industrialist's belief in the primacy of economic production and the marketplace over nature and community is clearly conveyed in the defendant's reminder to the court that economic factors play a large part in cases involving industry. Floriston declared that the mill

gives constant employment to workmen of the average number of 150, and that it manufactures and produces paper to the amount of 7000 tons and upwards per annum; that if the defendant were enjoined and restrained from operating its mills and works, irreparable damage would result to the defendant and damage would also result to its employees and customers; that neither the plaintiff nor any other person would be materially or otherwise benefitted by the cessation of said mills.

Unfortunately, the case was dismissed for jurisdictional reasons, so that no decision was rendered. This essentially served as a victory for the manufacturer, and as a result of dismissal the records do not reveal the court's perception of the validity of the com-



plaint. However, the case clearly defined the pollutants and their effects, as well as set the stage for the historical continuity of the problem.

The environment is all things to all people. It is natural, political, financial, cultural, architectural, historical, and technological. It is the landscape created by social and natural forces through time. As Michael Hough suggests in *Out of Place*, few environments, if any, can be viewed in isolation from humankind. The concept of natural process is an idea that is useful only if one perceives humanity as part of it.<sup>8</sup>

The study of environmental history in archival collections provides numerous examples of the ways in which the growth of industries and communities was dependent on the availability of natural resources and the technology to use them. Interpreting significant changes to the environment underscores the link between society and nature within the scope of ecosystems. In the words of one scientist,

The growth of cities and population in general has had a profound effect upon the landscape, and may

have an increasingly great effect as time goes by. In our need for additional water supplies, we have left but a handful of streams undammed. The dams themselves are significant landforms, and the reservoirs they create are major landscape alterations. Large dams may cause further landscape changes by triggering earthquakes. All dams collect sediment and will in time be flat valleys unless somehow they are heightened or their reservoirs excavated. The sediment they catch once went to build sand bars and beaches. In its absence, sand beaches are slowly withering to a collection of stones.<sup>9</sup>

Again, water is a dominant theme in California's history. Urban and rural communities, as well as industry and agriculture, depend on it and compete for it. The technology developed to enhance its uses has forever changed the world around us. San Francisco and surrounding communities depend on the Tuolumne River and the Hetch Hetchy Valley for both water and electricity. In the late 1980s, Interior Secretary Donald Hodel nearly created panic when he suggested draining the Hetch Hetchy reservoir and restoring the valley as part of Yosemite National Park.

DESCRIPTION	CALENDAR YEAR 1903 POUNDS	CALENDAR YEAR 1904 POUNDS	8 months ending Aug 31, 1905 POUNDS
ACID	100		60
ALUM	311065		30
ALCOHOL	30	105365	188510
ANILINE DYE	330	40	40
BRICK DUST		225	150
CLAY		650	
DEXTRINE	220	250	
DRUGS	505	2430	295
DRY COLOR	1360	730	332
DRY PAINT	1795	6660	3765
LITHARGE	1300	2430	3280
LIME	480950		
MAGNESITE	579050	432250	416250
RESIN	98570	407050	356250
SULPHUR	1467200	153100	27750
SULPHURIC ACID	3600	1103950	1285990
SODA	2110	1100	
SODA ASH	71940		
SALT	6000	19442	73169
SAND	469700	2000	
STARCH		195000	37900
		965	2480
TOTAL	3495825	2433637	2181664
			2462359

Figure 2. In *State of Nevada v. Floriston Pulp and Paper Company*, the state charged Floriston with polluting the Truckee River. This exhibit was submitted to the federal court to demonstrate the kinds and amounts of chemicals used by the mill.

Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.

This issue was not new. San Francisco thinks it cannot survive without using the central Sierra region's natural resources and has been fighting over Hetch Hetchy for nearly a century. A place of scenic splendor, Hetch Hetchy Valley was pronounced by painter William Keith to be "superior even to Yosemite Valley in its high-walled beauty" during his 1907 camping trip to the Sierra with John Muir.<sup>11</sup> Following a U.S. Geological Survey report recommending Hetch Hetchy as a potential cheap and reliable source of municipal water, in 1901 Mayor James Phelan selected the Tuolumne River system, including Hetch Hetchy, over other water sources for the quality and quantity of the water, a geological formation suitable for damming as a reservoir, and the potential for hydroelectric power.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, Hetch Hetchy Valley was within the boundaries of Yosemite National Park. But also in 1901 Congress passed the Right of Way Act, which authorized the secretary of the interior to grant rights of way through national parks for canals, tunnels, pipelines, or other water conduits, provided such facilities were not incompatible with the public interest.

In matters related to Hetch Hetchy, as in so many other environmental issues, it seemed impossible to identify a balance between environmental conservation and public good. There were numerous conflicting parties concerned with the development of Hetch Hetchy Valley as a water supply for San Francisco. In fact, the Sierra Club, founded by Muir in 1892 in part to protect the national parks from development, was split on the issue. Supporting the project were the city of San Francisco and Gifford Pinchot, founder of the U.S. Bureau of Forestry, who held a utilitarian view of conservation in which natural resources should be properly managed and harvested to enhance the public good. In opposition were E.A. Hitchcock, Theodore Roosevelt's secretary of the interior, who incorrectly believed that legislative authority did not support the city's efforts to claim the valley, and land owners in the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts, who feared they would lose their rights to Tuolumne water. Also opposed was John Muir, who believed that the national parks should be preserved from development as monuments to the aboriginal natural splendor of the New World and felt that granting rights and development within national parks would make them subject to the same pressures and utilitarian standards as the rest of the national landscape.<sup>13</sup>

The conflict came to a critical point as a result of the destruction of San Francisco by fire following the 1906 earthquake. It was believed that the Spring Valley Water Company, which held a virtual monopoly of the local water supply, had failed to provide an adequate system of water delivery to the city to

save it from the fires. The city's efforts to acquire the lands around Hetch Hetchy Valley and Eleanor and Cherry lakes as a water source was supported by the new interior secretary, James R. Garfield, in 1908. Two bond issues approved by the voters of San Francisco provided funds for purchasing the land to begin construction of the Hetch Hetchy system.

Again, opposition arose from the Turlock and Modesto irrigation districts, the Spring Valley Water Company, national park managers, and John Muir and some of his followers. Following the unsuccessful introduction of a number of bills in Congress, a bill was introduced that met the needs of San Francisco and overcame the objections of many of those opposing the project. On September 3, 1913, the House of Representatives adopted HR 7202 entitled the "Hetch Hetchy Act," but now known as the Raker Act.<sup>14</sup> Debate on such a monumental development and use of the natural landscape continued, pending a decision by the Senate. Contending interests ranged from support by San Francisco Bay area residents, the Army Corps of Engineers, and William Randolph Hearst and his newspapers to environmentalists' fears of the destruction of the valley's natural splendor, Senator W.E. Borah's concern about the death of the agricultural potential of the San Joaquin Valley, and numerous competing water interests.<sup>15</sup>

The Raker Act addressed many of these concerns by recognizing the prior water rights of the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts, requiring the city to construct scenic trails and roads and to provide water for camping purposes at the meadow near the Hetch Hetchy dam site, regulating San Francisco's right to cut timber in Yosemite National Park and Stanislaus National Forest, and providing that local water sources be used before water from the Tuolumne could be diverted.<sup>16</sup> The Senate adopted the Raker Act, and it was signed into law by President Wilson in December 1913. The Raker Act granted the city and county of San Francisco rights-of-way over the public lands for constructing, operating, and maintaining the infrastructure for conveying water for domestic purposes and for the generation, sale, and distribution of electric energy.

This piece of progressive-era legislation reflected the sentiments of philosopher George Santayana, who wondered how "California society would change and be changed by its natural environment" during a lecture at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1911.<sup>16</sup> Hetch Hetchy's glacier-created environment was technologically transformed into a commodity-producing landscape (see fig. 3). As the records show, it was this conversion of a natural resource (water) into a social necessity (electricity) and the sale of this utility that caused major problems for the city and county of San Francisco. In May 1923 the



National Park Service reported to the secretary of the interior that San Francisco was openly selling Hetch Hetchy power to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) in apparent violation of the Raker Act. This issue, in conjunction with section six of the Raker Act, ultimately brought Hetch Hetchy before the U.S. Supreme Court during its 1939 session.

Section six of the Raker Act states that the city and county of San Francisco "is prohibited from ever selling or letting to any corporation or individual, except a municipality or a municipal water district or irrigation district, the right to sell or sublet the water or electric energy sold or given to it or him by the said grantee."<sup>17</sup> The House Committee on Public Lands prepared a report that incorporated a complete analysis of the Raker Act. It stated that section six "was designed to prevent any monopoly or private corporation from hereafter obtaining control of the water supply of San Francisco."<sup>18</sup> During the congressional debate, Senator Norris in support of the act had stated that

It is giving to the people of the locality of San Francisco the right to use a cheap power when it is developed. To my mind, it is the very highest type of conservation. Here for the ages this stream has been running down from the mountains, even destroying property, without doing man any good, and this proposition is to harness that power and to put it to public use not to give it to a private corporation.

Here is an instance where we are going to give it directly to the people, if we pass this bill. It is going to come into competition with power companies and corporations that have, or will have, if this bill is defeated, almost a monopoly not only in San Francisco but throughout the greater portion of California.<sup>19</sup>

San Francisco defended itself from the Park Service charges by basing its position on the temporary nature of the contract with PG&E, its inability to obtain its own distribution system for at least two years, and the fact that the transfer of power was by consignment rather than sale. The issue was again



Figure 3. The Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, ca. 1935. From Superintendent's Monthly Reports, June-December, 1935, (file # 207-02) Yosemite National Park, Western Region, Records of the National Park Service (RG 79).  
*Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.*



Figure 4. The Hetch Hetchy Dam, 1935. The superintendent of Yosemite National Park included information on the proposed project to heighten the dam in his September 1935 report. The dam was completed in 1923 and raised in 1938. From Superintendent's Monthly Reports, June-December, 1935, (file # 207-02) Yosemite National Park, Western Region, Records of the National Park Service (RG 79).  
*Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.*

brought to life by Congressman Cramton in May 1928, when he delivered an attack against the city for selling electric power in "direct and open violation" of the Raker Act.<sup>20</sup> San Francisco Mayor James Rolph responded to a letter requesting information regarding this situation by indicating that the city was looking toward acquiring the distribution system from PG&E. This view of the contract being temporary was accepted as long as the city proceeded in good faith. Toward this end, in 1930 the city put forth a bond issue to the electors that would finance the acquisition of the distribution systems. Unfortunately, the voters defeated the bond issue.

Following this defeat, Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur<sup>21</sup> sent Rolph a memorandum stating that the department "cannot permit the arrangement between the city and the company to go on indefinitely, as an end in itself."<sup>22</sup> The memo suggested three courses of action open to the city: calling immediately for another bond election, terminating the contract in the absence of a bond election, or applying to Congress for modification of the Raker Act. The city was given three years to comply with the act. In 1933, the voters again rejected a bond proposal to construct a small municipal distribution system.

Two years later, what had once been an attempt to modify the environment to improve society had

clearly become a struggle between federal and local entities over the corporate use of publicly owned natural resources. A Department of the Interior inquiry into the situation resulted in Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes's 1935 opinion regarding the contract between San Francisco and PG&E in relationship to the Raker Act. Ickes held that

The legislative history of the Raker Act clearly shows that the purpose of section six was to prevent the water or power developed on the Hetch Hetchy project from ever falling into the hands of a private corporation or monopoly. From the facts it appears that the power developed on the Hetch Hetchy project had fallen into the hands of just such a corporation or monopoly.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, Ickes's opinion, found among the office files of the U.S. Attorney in San Francisco, averred that this controversy had existed for nearly a dozen years and that the arrangement, founded on the 1925 contract between San Francisco and PG&E regarding distribution of the Moccasin plant power and the direct sale by San Francisco to PG&E of power generated at the Early Intake power plant, violated the provisions contained in section six of the Raker Act.<sup>24</sup>

*United States of America v. City and County of San Francisco* went before the U.S. District Court for



Northern California, which concluded that the city was in violation of section six by the sale and distribution of Hetch Hetchy power through PG&E, a private utility. The city was required by injunction either to discontinue such disposal of the power or to cease further use of the lands and rights granted it under the act for generation and transmission of electric energy. Following this decision, the city was given a six-month grace period prior to the issuance of the injunction. The Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed the lower court, however, finding that the private utility was merely acting as the city's agent in the sale and distribution of Hetch Hetchy power and holding that section six does not prohibit such sale and distribution of that power by a private utility (see fig. 4).<sup>25</sup>

On April 22, 1940, Mr. Justice Black delivered the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States that the city and county of San Francisco was in violation of the Raker Act of 1913, thereby reversing the decision of the court of appeals, affirming the judgment of the district court, and remanding the case to it. This was not the last the public would hear of Hetch Hetchy and the Raker Act, however. As the city's needs continue to change, issues have arisen regarding the physical landscape and value of Hetch Hetchy as a natural resource. This includes problems that arose over a 1960 application for an amended right-of-way under the Raker Act in relation to construction of an aqueduct in Yosemite Park involving the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Also, in June 1995, a bill that appeared in the state Assembly that would have prevented San Francisco from selling hydroelectric power from the Hetch Hetchy dam was changed to address only the costs of water and power provided by a municipal utility.<sup>26</sup>

**T**he history of Hetch Hetchy is a case study in the ways that major social and economic issues are tied to the environment. In addition, as various groups have grappled with these issues, Hetch Hetchy has become an important symbol of the relationship between nature and culture. In a recent article concerning the transfer of federal land in the Mojave Desert for use as a nuclear dump, an opponent of the dump site was quoted as saying that "not since John Muir's heart was broken by the loss of Hetch Hetchy has California's environment lost such an important battle."<sup>27</sup>

The primary materials that document Hetch Hetchy can be found in numerous archival records: numerous federal, state, and local agencies; the Sierra Club; and the personal papers of John Muir at the University of the Pacific. They can also be

found in archival repositories, including the Bancroft Library (which holds the Sierra Club Archives, the papers of San Francisco Mayor James Phelan and water engineer William Hammond Hall, and numerous other collections on the topic); Yosemite National Park; the California State Archives (which also holds papers of the San Francisco Department of Water and Power); the National Archives; and the California Historical Society (which holds, among other collections, papers of San Francisco mayor James Rolph and William Hammond Hall). William Hammond Hall papers can also be found at the California State Archives and at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. Primary sources related to this and other environmental topics are extensive and diverse. They may be generated by government and business activities that make direct changes to the landscape, such as through road construction, architecture, agriculture, logging, and civil engineering. They may also be created and collected by organizations and individuals that manage or use the land, such as local, state, or federal parks, land and wildlife agencies, transportation companies, farmers and ranchers, and local communities. More personal insight into the changed and changing landscape may be found in the diaries, letters, and visual materials of travelers, artists, and park and railroad employees and can be found in the collections of historical societies and libraries.

Environmental documentation includes records that describe the environment and record the ways it has changed, the dynamic relationship between nature and culture, and the role of technology. These records are equally valuable for historical study and contemporary scientific research. The documentation may be enhanced by understanding why it was created and how its use has changed over time. For example, historic photographs of scenic views originally intended to promote tourism or encourage support for the preservation of natural wonders are now being used by scientists to study environmental change through comparison to modern photographs.

Understanding the historical forces and events that have had an impact on the environment are essential to providing historical continuity and contemporary relevance. Historical records that document active relationships between culture and nature, and the development of science and technology indicate the values, philosophies, and economic and social factors that engendered certain actions and the ways in which these actions affected the world we inherited and the legacy we leave for the future.

CHS

*See notes beginning on page 106.*

## THE PROMISE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN PHYSICS AND MEDICINE

### The Quest for SPEAR and Living with AIDS

by Robin Chandler

Science and medicine are deeply rooted in the history of California. Over the past one hundred and fifty years, scientists and physicians in the Golden State have contributed research, made discoveries, invented machines, and formulated healing strategies that have benefitted California, the nation, and the world. Institutional, university, state, and federal archives preserve and maintain the documentary heritage that tells the story of California's scientists, inventors, and physicians. The following narrative draws on these archival records in the fields of science and medicine, focusing on two very different but related case studies. *The Quest for SPEAR: Funding Big Science* provides a window into the development of particle physics research, a field that has resulted in the award of numerous Nobel Prizes to scientists at California institutions. *Living with AIDS: Preserving the San Francisco Response* examines the onset of a dangerous viral epidemic and the unique and humane response of the California health sciences community to this social tragedy.

Most importantly, these two case studies demonstrate how archivists must imagine the future to document the past. The twentieth century has witnessed a communication revolution fostered by the photocopy and fax machines, as well as the computer, that has resulted in voluminous paper documentation and the creation of electronic and other new types of records. To rescue history from this flood of information, archivists have developed sophisticated appraisal tools to help document our dynamic times. The following case studies explore how archivists have successfully employed traditional, as well as developed new, methodologies of documentation strategy and documentation planning in the fields of science and medicine to preserve the history of the Golden State of today for the Californians of tomorrow.

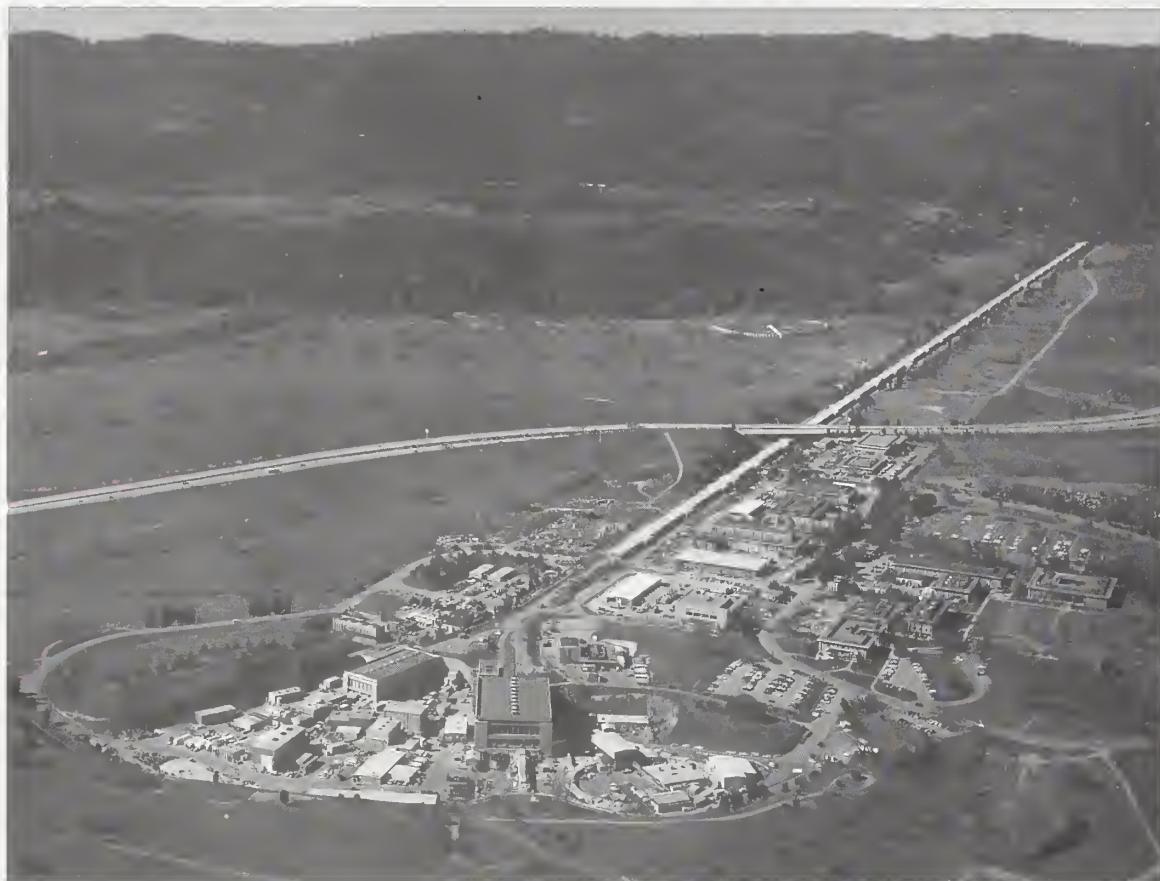
#### THE QUEST FOR SPEAR: FUNDING BIG SCIENCE

For better and for worse, the Cold War redefined American science...driven by the politics of national security and by the Pentagon's belief in the competitive advantages of high technology, spending for defense research and development surpassed its wartime peak by the end of the Korean War, then climbed to dizzying heights after Sputnik, reaching \$5.5 billion a year by 1960.

During the 1960s, the United States aggressively continued the Cold War, attempting to stem the spread of communism on all fronts—at home, abroad, and in space. Millions of dollars were allocated to support the military buildup in Southeast Asia and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) efforts to put the first man on the moon. However, funding for "pure science," such as the exploration of the subatomic world of particle physics, was becoming scant, as existing resources were designated for winning the war in Vietnam or gearing up for the Apollo moon shot.

This was the financial and political atmosphere in which a group of experimental physicists at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) sought funding in 1964 for a machine that would be known as SPEAR. The Stanford Positron Electron Asymmetric Ring (SPEAR) project, led by Professor Burton Richter, would add a new dimension to the experimental research program at SLAC, by developing a new technology that could explore higher energy levels where the elusive heavier subatomic particles are formed. The agonizing process of requesting federal funding was not unfamiliar to the community of physicists at SLAC. The physicists and administrators who conceptualized the original two-mile linear accelerator (linac) during the 1950s had worked aggressively for four years, lobbying to win presidential approval and congressional authoriza-





The Stanford Linear Accelerator Center in 1972. The two-mile linac begins in the eastern foothills of the Santa Cruz mountains and culminates with the experimental end stations located in the research yard just west of the Stanford University campus. The recently completed SPEAR storage ring is located in the right front of the research yard area.

*Courtesy of SLAC Archives & History Office, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, a Department of Energy facility managed by Stanford University.*

tion. The era of big science required big budgets, and resource procurement demanded time and energy formerly devoted by scientists to research.

In 1957, a formal proposal to the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) was prepared and submitted by scientists at the Microwave Laboratory of Stanford University, led by their director, W.K.H. Panofsky. But it was not until 1961 that the proposal, affectionately known by the Stanford physicists as "Project M," became a fiscal reality. It would be the largest single expenditure of funds for a single-purpose research facility, a two-mile-long accelerator, or what the team called M, for Monster.<sup>2</sup> Single purpose research had never been attempted at this monstrous a scale, hence the name M, for Monster, stuck.

The proposal was built solidly on a history of successful electron accelerator physics at Stanford. A

Nobel Prize in Physics had been awarded to Professor Robert Hofstadter for his pioneering studies of electron scattering to determine the size and structure of the nucleus of the atom. At Project M, electrons would be accelerated along a two-mile linac<sup>3</sup> into stationary targets. Inside the target material, the electrons would strike the nucleus, probing and scattering from it. During the collision, new particles would be formed, data collected, and properties determined about the nature of the nuclear matter. "The proposed machine was a maverick in the then prevalent pattern of US high-energy physics..." according to Panofsky. "The main thrust...depended on proton accelerators, primarily the Bevatron at Berkeley, and the Alternating Gradient Synchrotron at Brookhaven."<sup>4</sup>

The scientific merits of the proposed program had to be evaluated and measured against the costs

of this major undertaking by congressional bodies such as the Joint Committee for Atomic Energy. Much political maneuvering was required to approve the proposal, even though it had the outspoken support of both presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. Protracted congressional inquiry about site selection, use of public power utilities, and designation of royalties for industrial partners, as well as attempts to link the accelerator project with construction of a Hanford, Washington, nuclear site, almost cancelled Project M several times. Additionally, the primary objective of the large accelerator was to be unclassified basic physics research, a field with no connection to the more readily funded nuclear weaponry development.

Authorization was finally awarded to the Stanford group on September 15, 1961, and the vision of SLAC became a reality. The final contract between Stanford and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) provided \$114 million for construction of the machine and \$18 million for pre-construction research and development.<sup>5</sup> In 1967, SLAC, now led by Director W.K.H. Panofsky, generated its first electron beam and embarked on a research program of deep inelastic scattering that resulted in the discovery of the quark. This discovery led to a Nobel Prize in 1990 for its discoverers, the team of Richard Taylor, Henry Kendall, and Jerome Friedman.

Scientists generally grumble that their constant quest for funding wastes valuable time that could be used on their actual experiments and that the lack of funding prevents them from trying to test many theories.<sup>6</sup> The scientific merits of a program are often minimized or lost when reduced to monetary figures on a spreadsheet, and some scientifically worthy projects receive funding only through the maneuvering of pork-barrel politics. Physicists trained to pursue an elusive particle are often stymied by the bureaucratic process of funding procurement, and resent the need to redirect their resources. The quest for funding for SPEAR would require a similar mixture of patience, determination, and the aggressive political lobbying that originally built SLAC. In the case of SPEAR, the knowledge that the machine would produce good science, combined with some creative manipulation of the construction budget, resulted in the award of funding for the storage ring in 1972.

SPEAR had its roots in the Stanford-Princeton colliding beam storage ring project. During 1956 and 1957, while the proposal for SLAC was being prepared by the Microwave Laboratory team, two young physicists who would introduce a revolu-

tionary idea to particle physics arrived at Stanford University. Burton Richter, with his Ph.D. from MIT, came with a keen interest in studying quantum electrodynamics with high-energy electrons, but he questioned the loss of energy in fixed target experiments and sought a new solution. Gerard O'Neill, on leave from Princeton, came to Stanford with a brilliant idea to maximize all the energy available in a collision process by conserving lost energy. O'Neill envisioned an accelerator with two circulating beams of electrons, guided by magnets, that would result in higher energy collisions yielding particles never before observed. The two electrons, one in each beam, would stop each other almost dead in their tracks, like two automobiles colliding head-on.<sup>7</sup>

In 1958, O'Neill and Richter proposed the new machine to Panofsky, then director of the Microwave Laboratory, who enthusiastically sought and secured funds from the Office of Naval Research for the project. After solving many engineering problems encountered with the development of the new technology, the physicists, led by Richter, began recording data from collisions in 1962, and colliding-beam, or storage ring, physics was born at Stanford. In 1965, Richter's group published one of the most definitive papers on quantum electrodynamics and firmly established the worthiness of research with colliding beam storage rings.

The new idea struck a chord, and soon researchers at other parts of the globe were in various stages of building their own storage rings. In 1961, Italian physicists built AdA, the Italian acronym for storage ring, and improved the colliding beam design by housing the two beams of electrons and positrons within one-ring housing. Taking to heart Panofsky's vision "that a laboratory is only as good as its next idea," Burton Richter was already at work planning a larger storage ring to be built at SLAC after the linear accelerator was completed. Estimated at a construction cost of twenty million dollars, Richter and his group designed a one-ring machine capable of storing beams up to 3 GeV that would be injected with electrons from the linear accelerator.<sup>8</sup>

In 1964, the Richter group submitted its first proposal for the electron-positron collider to the AEC, and thus began a funding saga of epic proportions, strangely reminiscent of the wanderings of Ulysses. Concurrently, the Cambridge Electron Accelerator (CEA) requested funding from the AEC for a similar storage ring proposal. While the SLAC proposal received strong recommendations and a higher rat-



ing than CEA from the review panel of physicists, funding was not allocated for either project. After resubmitting the SPEAR proposal again in 1965, 1966, and 1967, it became clear that, with the Vietnam War heating up and the Apollo moon shot getting into high gear, money for pure science was becoming scarce.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, physicists in Europe and the Soviet Union had seized upon the collider concept and were constructing storage rings. It was becoming a real possibility that SLAC, the laboratory where collider physics had been conceived, would not participate in the mature science the new technology promised. Refusing to abandon the project, Richter redesigned his collider twice in a period of two years, bringing costs down first to nine million, and then to five million dollars. But

once again, SPEAR was competing for AEC construction funds with another "pure physics" project authorized and underway at the National Accelerator Laboratory (now known as FermiLab, near Chicago), and in 1969, SLAC learned that the colliding beam project was again eliminated from the AEC's 1971 budget. Exasperated after so many defeats, Director Panofsky fired off a letter to the President's Office of Science and Technology warning that as a result of the delay, an entire field of scientific technology, the only non-orthodox tool available to high energy physics, was in danger of being lost to the country entirely.<sup>10</sup>

At this time, when the project appeared totally defeated and the physics community at a loss, AEC controller John Abadessa approached the SLAC



Burton Richter, Martin Perl, and Gerson Goldhaber (right to left) in the SPEAR control room looking at the computer display showing the decay products of the  $\psi$  particle in the Mark I detector, November 1974.

*Courtesy of SLAC Archives & History Office, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, a Department of Energy facility managed by Stanford University.*

physicists and administrators with a means to cut through the fiscal red tape obstructing the project. Abadessa had discovered a loophole in the AEC funding regulations that would allow SPEAR to be built out of yearly allocated operating equipment funds instead of specially requested construction funds. On paper, however, SPEAR must be considered a detector to be used at SLAC, and not proposed as an independent accelerator. Abadessa submitted his revised AEC budget, with the SPEAR equipment allocation, and defended his action before the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, which granted congressional authorization. Under Panofsky's tight fiscal administration during the next year, SLAC was able to build its ring from operating funds. Once the funds were available the machine took a mere eighteen months to build and an even more unbelievable two weeks to get working in April 1973.<sup>11</sup> In November 1974, Richter's experimental Group C "discovered a sharp peak," the energy range providing evidence of a new discovery, the psi particle, at SPEAR. In 1976 Burton Richter received the Noble Prize in Physics for his research at SPEAR that verified the existence of the charm quark in the Standard Model of Physics. Richter shared this prize with Sam Ting, for his proton physics research at Brookhaven National Laboratory, which had discovered the j particle and corroborated the SPEAR evidence.<sup>12</sup>

The records that document the planning, design, construction, and research program of SPEAR form part of the SLAC Archives and History Program; the archives are housed at SLAC, near the Stanford University campus. Many of these records were located, appraised, and preserved as a result of SLAC's participation in a documentation strategy sponsored by the American Institute of Physics's (AIP) study of Multi-Institutional Collaborations.<sup>13</sup> Multi-institutional collaborations, comprised of several hundred scientists worldwide, have become the organizational framework for particle physics research during the post World-War II era. This complex process was described by an authority: "a single experiment at SLAC can easily take five years from proposal and design to the final analysis of data...initially an idea must be proposed...a research group assembled...millions of dollars in funding must be sought and acquired...members design and build a new particle detector for use at an accelerator...already years into the project, the running time of the experiment must be scheduled beside others sharing particle beam time...finally data is collected, analyzed, and results written."<sup>14</sup>

The use of traditional archival methods would make access to this information virtually impossible. New methods for appraisal and preservation of twentieth-century scientific records were thus required. The documentation strategy involves archivists, historians, and records creators in a joint analysis of documentation problems to create a more unified approach to the creation, collection, and preservation of records.

As part of its effort to establish an archival program at the laboratory, SLAC participated in the AIP study of high-energy physics collaborations. This project focused on five key international accelerator laboratories, one of which was SLAC, and on twenty-three specific experimental collaborations using these five facilities. Primary to the study were oral history interviews conducted with physicists, graduate students, engineers, computer programmers, and laboratory administrators, covering topics such as the decision-making process of collaborations, the frequency and mode of communication within the collaboration, the division of labor, and how these affect the creation and preservation of documentation. In addition, three sample historical studies, or probes, were conducted for specific experiments. One of these probes, conducted at SLAC by historian Peter Galison, concerned the discovery of the psi particle by Burton Richter's experimental Group C at SPEAR. The probe was an exploration of archival sources relevant to writing an authoritative history, undertaken in order to alert archivists, physicists, and laboratory administrators to the kinds of questions and themes that could interest historians of contemporary physics. As a result of this probe, many of the records that describe the search for the funding of SPEAR were located, appraised, and preserved.

The AIP project resulted in a set of formal guidelines and policies for the appraisal and preservation of relevant records in high-energy physics for use by archivists and laboratory administrators. The records of similar scientific collaborations and national laboratory research facilities specializing in the fields of physics, astronomy, aeronautics, and geology are maintained by archival repositories throughout California and include the National Archives, the Department of Energy (formerly the AEC), NASA, SLAC, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the United States Geological Survey, and many college and university archives.



LIVING WITH AIDS:  
PRESERVING THE SAN FRANCISCO RESPONSE

The importance of new methods for appraising archival information on medical history is illustrated in the story of early AIDS research and treatment. During the early 1980s, events were taking place that would determine the fate of hundreds of thousands of Americans and shape the future of the health care system in the United States. These critical events were summarized by one author: "a virulent virus was identified and the illness given a proper medical name: AIDS, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Gay men and lesbian women, a group with enormous political and economic clout but often fractious as an entity, were galvanized as a unified force. They pioneered a landmark social-service network and spurred government response to the strange sickness...the San Francisco AIDS model, a system of home care relying primarily on community volunteers and only secondarily on the medical industry, helped set national public policy. And San Francisco became, for the world to hail and duplicate, the sterling prototype of a city best coping under the siege of AIDS."<sup>15</sup>

In 1978, just a few years after Burton Richter received his Nobel Prize for research at SPEAR, Paul O'Malley, a disease control administrator for the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH), was heading a community hepatitis study sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta. Studying the interrelation of social patterns with hepatitis, with the hope of producing a vaccine for the disease, the CDC was spearheading a national effort to provide the first epidemiology of the hepatitis B virus. The effort focused on communities in five major U.S. cities, including Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, St. Louis, and San Francisco. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that can be caused by abuse of alcohol, drugs, or viral exposure. The most widespread and serious kind of viral hepatitis is hepatitis type B, which can be spread by blood transfusions, shared needles, or through close physical contact, including sexual contact. In the late 1970s, hepatitis B was one of the most common and most serious infections among gay men.

O'Malley had been working for the SFDPH since 1973, when he began treating patients at the municipally operated Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Clinic located south of Market Street in San Francisco. Introduced during World War II, antibiotics—the miracle drugs—had fostered a feeling of security among the general public and promoted a sense

that now there was a cure for everything that could cause an infection, especially sexually transmitted diseases. Sexual liberation had been nurtured by the medical breakthroughs of contraception and antibiotic treatment. At the STD Clinic, O'Malley saw approximately 1,500 patients a week, mostly gay men, suffering from gonorrhea, hepatitis, and syphilis. O'Malley knew that gay men were taking more antibiotics than anyone in the population, and privately wondered if this overmedication would ever lead to the development of a cancer.

O'Malley's hepatitis B cohort included some 6,704 gay men in San Francisco who answered survey questions about their sexual practices and provided blood samples for epidemiological study. Blood samples from the cohort were taken in both 1978 and 1979. Tested for evidence of either current or past infection with the hepatitis B virus, these samples were eventually stored in the laboratories of the CDC. The study found that in the San Francisco population, seventy-five percent of the men were currently or had been infected with hepatitis B. Twenty-five percent of the group was thus available for the vaccine trials that began in April 1980. The Food and Drug Administration licensed the hepatitis B vaccine in 1982 and made it available for public use.

With the hepatitis study all but completed, O'Malley had begun to consider his next project. Attending a conference in 1981, O'Malley heard of a mysterious new illness causing gay men to die of Kaposi's sarcoma (KS) and pneumocystis carinii pneumonia. Shortly afterward, O'Malley realized that one of the first KS cases in San Francisco had been a member of the hepatitis B cohort. When eleven of the first twenty-four cases of the mysterious illness were confirmed as members of the cohort, O'Malley knew he had found his new research project.

In September 1982, the CDC first used the term AIDS in an article for the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, describing an AIDS case similar to a disease predictive of a defect in cell-mediated immunity, occurring in a person with no known cause for diminished resistance to the disease.<sup>16</sup> The diseases typical of AIDS cases included rare cancers and opportunistic infections such as Kaposi's sarcoma and pneumocystis carinii pneumonia. In May 1984, the journal *Science* published a group of reports written by virologists Robert C. Gallo and colleagues at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and by Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute of Paris, France. These studies established the retrovirus linked to

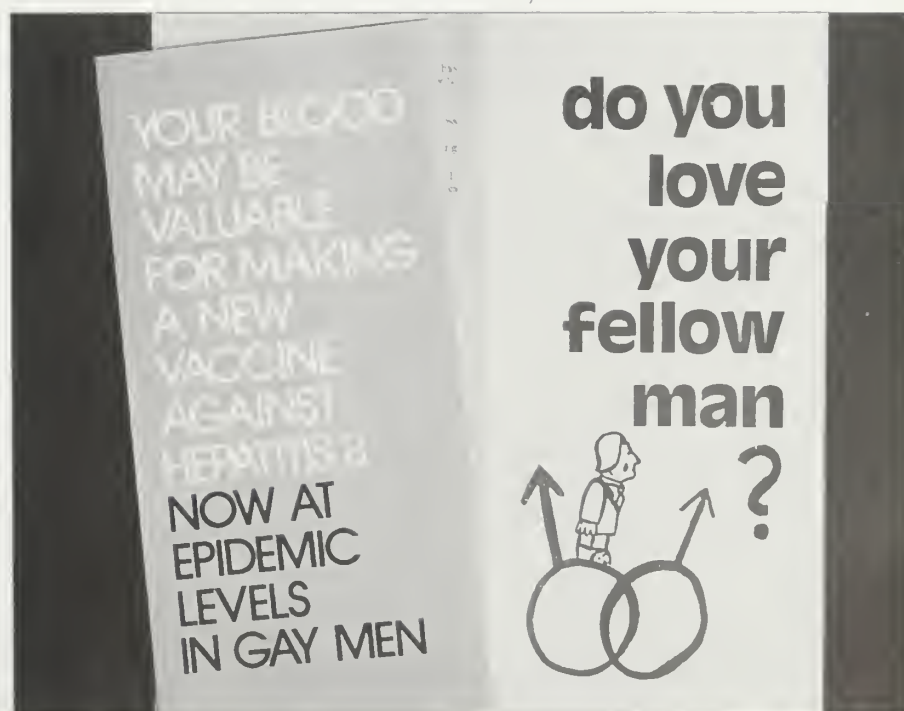
AIDS, identified by NCI staff as HTLV-III, and by the French as LAV. They named the newly discovered retrovirus HIV, for human immunodeficiency virus.

"Epidemiology, unlike virology, has a strong social dimension in that it explicitly incorporates perceptions of a population's social relations, behavioral patterns, and experiences into its explanations of disease," wrote a historian of AIDS. The "epidemiological approach gave the new disease a human face...by defining the behaviors, epidemiology countered attempts to reduce the etiology of HIV infection to a virus alone...and offered the possibility of primary prevention in the form of health education and follow-up, particularly important in the absence of a vaccine or a successful therapy."<sup>17</sup> As a disease control administrator for the San Francisco Department of Public Health, O'Malley knew that the city's hepatitis B cohort blood samples and survey statistics remained in existence, preserved by the CDC. This fact gave the now-established AIDS Office of the SFDPH the unique opportunity, once the virus had been identified and testing made possible, to go back and retest the blood of hundreds of gay men from that earlier time.

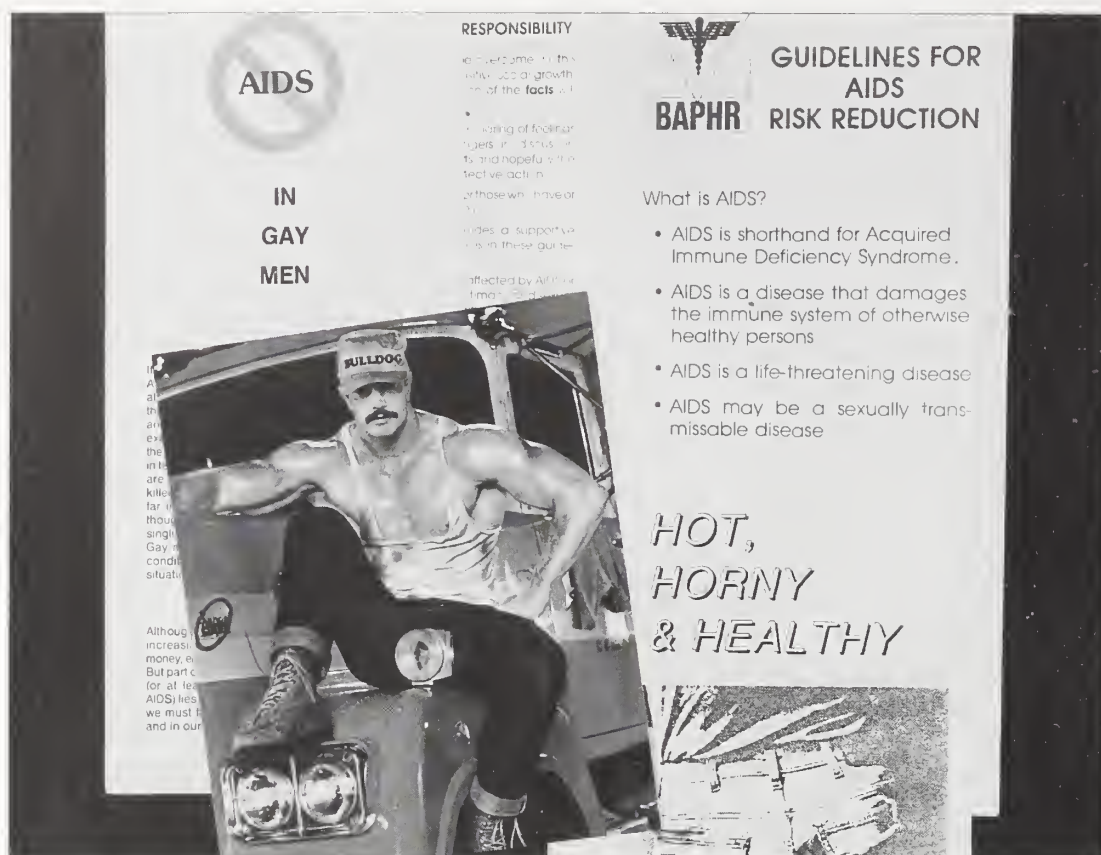
In a community facility, clinical trial records are administratively maintained for a period of about three years. This limited retention of records is fur-

ther supported by the pressure of limited office space, resulting in the need to reduce voluminous records. A packrat by nature, O'Malley had preserved the handwritten logbook of 6,704 names and addresses of study participants. Unlike his counterparts at the Los Angeles Lesbian and Gay Community Clinic, he had not destroyed the base register at the end of the hepatitis B study. While the clinics in Chicago and Denver had also retained this documentation, their populations were not at the center of the intensifying epidemic. O'Malley's logbook allowed the SFDPH to connect the blood samples with the names of individuals. Because of this chance occurrence, the SFDPH was able to locate and enroll many of the original hepatitis B study donors into the currently ongoing San Francisco AIDS Office clinic study. The CDC gave O'Malley \$100,000 to do a ten-percent random sample. Six hundred seventy men volunteered to participate in the new study, which has provided researchers with the opportunity to investigate the path of the AIDS virus in a vulnerable group and has provided more information about the progress of the disease than any other single study. The projection that more than 1.5 million Americans may already be infected with the HIV virus is based in part on what has happened to these San Francisco men.<sup>18</sup>

Pamphlets circulated by the San Francisco Department of Public Health City Clinic during the late 1970s. Targeted at the gay community, the pamphlets recruited participants for the hepatitis B study underway between 1978 and 1980, and provided information about prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. Courtesy Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern California, AIDS Ephemeral Collection.







After AIDS was initially identified in 1982 as a disease associated with the exchange of bodily fluids, community organizations began making information available to the gay male community on ways of preventing infection. Organizations, including the San Francisco Department of Public Health, Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights (BAPHR), and the Bulldog Baths, produced these brochures and handouts in 1982 and 1983. From these materials one can see the emerging emphasis on safe sex in a permissive era.

*Courtesy University of California San Francisco Library and Center for Knowledge Management, Archives and Special Collections, AIDS History Project.*

For large numbers of Americans, AIDS and HIV have become synonymous with experiencing the realities of caring for dying loved ones. However, hope exists amid this harsh reality. Members of the 1978 hepatitis B study have been living with HIV, and have not contracted AIDS. One member of the cohort has been HIV positive for sixteen years. "It was a total fluke that I took part in the hepatitis study in 1978," this cohort member recalled, "and it wasn't until 1986 that [I] even saw the advertisement asking for former hepatitis study participants to contact the San Francisco AIDS Office. Once there [I] learned [I] was HIV positive. I was upset for about 45 minutes, but then told myself that no matter what the odds, being infected didn't have to be a death sentence."<sup>19</sup> Of the 670 men participating in the San Francisco City Clinic AIDS study, two thirds have

been diagnosed with, and have died of, AIDS. "Survivors hold secrets that others could benefit from," according to Paul O'Malley. "It is in this group that clues to a vaccine for AIDS will be found."<sup>20</sup>

To document the response to the AIDS crisis in the city of San Francisco since 1981, the Department of Archives and Special Collections at the Library and Center for Knowledge Management (CKM) at the University of California, San Francisco, has sponsored the AIDS History Project (AHP). San Francisco was prepared early in the course of the epidemic to devote considerable resources to AIDS, and to develop a partnership between government and community-based organizations in the use of these resources.<sup>21</sup> San Franciscans began early to build community-based organizations (CBOs) to deal with the growing numbers of sick and dying. The impres-

sive collaboration of city and state agencies, hospitals, health care providers, political activists, and CBOs became known as the "San Francisco model" of AIDS care. A large array of services evolved to help people affected by HIV. It is the evolution of this complex web that the AIDS History Project aims to capture, by preserving the history of the CBOs, often ad hoc groups whose records, without archival intervention, could follow a path directly to the recycling center.

AHP archival appraisal decisions rely partially on the tool known as a documentation plan, developed for application in health care by Joan Krizack in her work entitled *Documentation Planning for the U. S. Health Care System*. In the case of the AHP, rather than documenting all the activities of specific agencies, this technique concentrates on documenting a specific range of functions and activities and assessing various agencies to see which best chronicle each of these. The AIDS History Project plan calls for four distinct accessioning activities. The first documents the functions and activities of AIDS Agencies surveyed by the AHP targeting regulation: fund raising, policy formation, health promotion, health care, and support of legal, emotional, financial, spiritual, and practical needs. Organizations documented in this effort include the AIDS Office of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights, Stop AIDS Project, San Francisco General Hospital, and the AIDS Emergency Fund.

The comprehensive documentation of one AIDS agency is the second accessioning activity of the AHP. The San Francisco Aids Foundation (SFAF) was selected as the ideal agency primarily because it was the first community-based AIDS organization in San Francisco and a model for later CBOs and because it is a multi-service organization.

The third accessioning activity is the concise documentation of several agencies by collecting a core set of records for these agencies that document their history, intent, and activities, such as board meeting minutes, policy and planning documents, and newsletters. The final accessioning activity is an "artificial" collection comprised of education and prevention materials, posters and other ephemera, newsletters, reports, surveys, and—if preservation issues can be settled—a large and colorful array of condoms and other safe-sex materials.

The AIDS History Project represents the primary documentation plan currently used to record the rise of AIDS and the resources mobilized against it within the California region. The work of AHP is

complemented by a concurrent oral history program—co-sponsored by the Bancroft Library's Regional Oral History Office, the UCSF History of Health Sciences Department, and the UCSF Library and CKM—entitled the San Francisco Bay Area AIDS Oral History Project. This program is focusing on three areas: the medical response, 1981-1984; the response of the nursing profession; and the community physicians. Nationally, other ongoing projects also ensure that records documenting this epidemic are preserved, such as the efforts of archivists at the Massachusetts State Archives to document the work of the AIDS ACTION Committee in Boston. These archivists are developing a records management program for the committee to ensure the transfer of their archival records to a research institution committed to preserving AIDS-related records. In addition, the American Association for the History of Medicine sponsors an AIDS History Group, whose members are comprised of archivists, historians, and librarians concerned with the preservation of AIDS-related documentation and historical scholarship of the epidemic.

Medicine and health care are documented in California at a variety of institutions, including corporations, federal facilities, religious institutions, and universities—such as Blue Cross of California, the Veterans Administration, the Sisters of Mercy, and various campuses of the University of California. The many facets of medicine documented include health-care policy, biomedical research, insurance, prevention, diagnosis, and care. The AIDS History Project provides a glimpse into the kinds of medical information preserved in California's modern archival repositories, and suggests one among many areas in which the state has pioneered in the field of medicine. CHS

*See notes beginning on page 107*

*Head of archives and special collections at the University of California, San Francisco, university archivist Robin L. Chandler received her master's degree in library and information studies from the University of California at Berkeley and is completing her second graduate degree in American history at San Francisco State University. During her tenure as archivist at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, she edited Architext, the newsletter of the Science, Technology and Healthcare Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists.*



## PUBLIC RECORDS AND GENEALOGY: A Serendipitous Adventure

by Suzanne Dewberry

In its heyday, Hollywood's movie industry had a tremendous impact on the culture and industry of California. For more than sixty years of its "Golden Age," Hollywood was an internationally known and recognized symbol reflecting cultural mores, attitudes, styles, and fashions. Hollywood was more than a representation of a film industry. It was a composite of individuals, some of whom were the most recognized and emulated in the world. Sadly, many of these same well-known individuals who provided so many hours of entertainment for older generations of Californians are hardly even recognizable names to a younger generation these days. This article will provide a "snapshot" of some relatively little-known resources that are available for researching the history of the most famous people from a long-gone era, as well as a historical capsule of one person's genealogical search.

As a teenager, having just moved from the East Coast to the West, I was captivated by "movie stars," as most of us then were. My family had the good fortune to live in Sherman Oaks, in close proximity to many future stars, aspiring actors and actresses, cinematographers, directors, producers, and their families. Next door to our home lived Lou Costello, and across the street in the same apartment building lived James Garner and Clint Eastwood. I watched from my front yard as they left for work. Up the street from us lived Jack Webb and Julie London, and still farther up the street lived Mickey Rooney. A few blocks over lived Sterling Hayden and his wife, Madeline Carrol. I was surrounded by famous people and was in seventh heaven. I was not exactly an autograph hound because I was too timid, but given a convenient opportunity, I leaped at the chance to get one or two. One of my prizes was the autograph of Jayne Mansfield.

I had no real appreciation of the impact Hollywood had on southern California until I began working for the National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region. As an archivist assigned responsibility for providing access to records, I was responsible for learning what information would characteristically

be contained in those documents. After studying the finding aids and sampling selected series, I was astounded to learn the magnitude of the holdings that relate in various ways to Hollywood personalities. Leonard Nimoy stated in a recent re-run of the series *In Search of* that "we are a nation of records keepers." This is a significant concept, since most people cannot begin to imagine the number, nature, and scope of records about individuals that are kept by many local, city, county, and federal agencies. While Hollywood movie stars are famous for the work they did and do, the basic fact is that they are people, just like you and me, and were required to participate in government activities such as naturalization and litigation. These activities produced a body of records that provide information about their personal and family histories.

While neither typical nor routine, the naturalization process tended to generate documents related to the large number of foreign-born individuals involved in the movie industry who became United States citizens, either by naturalization of their parents or in their own right. A few years ago during the Oscar ceremonies, director Billy Wilder thanked the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the United States government for allowing him to become a citizen, thus affording him numerous career opportunities in the film industry. Jack L. Warner of Warner Bros. Studios was a derivative citizen because of the naturalization of his father. Stars who became naturalized citizens in the federal court in Los Angeles in their own right included Errol Flynn, Marleine (Marlene) Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Cary Grant, Alfred Hitchcock, Peter Lorre, Hedy LaMarr, Paul Lukas, Paul Hernreid, Victor McLaglen, Ramon Navarro, George Sanders, Ray Milland, Charles Boyer, sisters Olivia de Havilland and Joan Fontaine, Peter Lawford, Pola Negri, Bella Lugosi, Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, and Fernando Lamas. Movie moguls, directors, cinematographers, screen writers, musicians, conductors, and composers, including Erich von Stroheim, Igor Stravinsky, James Wong Howe, Fritz Lang,

TRIPPLICATE  
(To be given to  
declarant)

No. 80117

# UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## DECLARATION OF INTENTION

(Invalid for all purposes seven years after the date hereof)

In the Court of  
337  
of at  
I, **MARIA MAGDALENE SIEBER** (Professionally known as: )  
(**MARLENE DIETRICH**)  
now residing at **Beverly Wilshire Hotel, Beverly Hills, California**  
occupation **Actress**, aged **32** years, do declare on oath that my personal description is:  
Sex **Female**, color **White**, complexion **Light**, color of eyes **Blue**  
color of hair **Blonde**, height **5** feet **8** inches; weight **124** pounds; visible distinctive marks  
None  
race **German**, nationality **German**  
I was born in **Berlin, Germany** on **12/27/04**  
I am **married**. The name of my wife or husband is **Rudolf**  
we were married on **5/17/23** at **Berlin, Germany**; she or he was  
born at **Ansis, Czechoslovakia** on **2/22/96** entered the United States  
at **New York City** on **9/26/33** for permanent residence therein, and now  
reside **with me**. I have **one** child, and the name, date and place of birth,  
and place of residence of each of said children are as follows:  
**Maria, 12/13/24, Berlin, Germany; resides with me.**  
I have **not** heretofore made a declaration of intention: Number \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_  
at \_\_\_\_\_  
my last foreign residence was **Berlin, Germany**  
I emigrated to the United States of America from **Charbourg, France**  
my lawful entry for permanent residence in the United States was at **New York City**  
under the name of **Maria Magdalene Sieber** on **9/26/33**  
on the vessel **PARIS**

I will, before being admitted to citizenship, renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, and particularly, by name, to the prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of which I may be at the time of admission a citizen or subject; I am not an anarchist; I am not a polygamist nor a believer in the practice of polygamy; and it is my intention in good faith to become a citizen of the United States of America and to reside permanently therein; and I certify that the photograph affixed to the duplicate and triplicate hereof is a likeness of me: So HELP ME GOD.



*Maria Magdalene Sieber*  
Subscribed and sworn to before me in the office of the Clerk of said Court,  
at **Los Angeles, Cal.**, this **5th** day of **March**  
anno Domini **1937**. Certification **23-63264** from the Commis-  
sioner of Immigration and Naturalization showing the lawful entry of the  
declarant for permanent residence on the date stated above, has been received  
by me. The photograph affixed to the duplicate and triplicate hereof is a like-  
ness of the declarant.

[SEAL]

By

Form 2202-L-A  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

Marlene Dietrich's Declaration of Intention to become a citizen, from the holdings of the National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region, Record Group 21, Records of the United States District Court for the Southern District of California, Central Division (Los Angeles).  
Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region.

Eric Korngold, Ernst Lubtisch, Louis B. Mayer, Mack Sennett, King Vidor, and Billy Wilder also became naturalized in U.S. district courts.

The most common mode of travel to the United States prior to the late 1940s and early 1950s was by passenger ship. Because naturalization records generally include the petition, the declaration of inten-

tion to become a citizen, and a certificate of arrival, it is fairly easy to find the names of the ships and the dates of arrivals for most of the movie stars who entered, departed, and re-entered this country many times. Some stars entered in non-traditional ways, as did Errol Flynn, whose petition states that he entered this country *on foot*, via Mexico. Others



arrived on ocean liners from unexpected places, as did Joan Fontaine and Olivia de Havilland, who were born of British parents in Tokyo because their father was teaching at a university in Japan. They entered the United States via the Port of San Francisco. Greta Garbo entered the United States through the Port of New York on several occasions. One of the vessels on which she traveled was the *S.S. Gripsholm*, which was later used as a hospital ship during World War II.

Even after the stock market crash of 1929, many stars made or continued to make tremendous amounts of money and displayed enviable, lavish lifestyles. James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, Errol Flynn, John Barrymore, Oona Chaplin, Paulette Goddard, Sterling Hayden, Dana Andrews, Lou Costello, John Gilbert, Johnny Weissmuller, Bing Crosby, Jascha Heifetz, Preston Foster, and many others were yacht owners. Movie moguls or their studios also owned yachts. These included Cecil B. DeMille, Louis A. Fleischman, Louis B. Mayer, Hal Roach, and Jack L. Warner. Many of these individuals contributed to the war efforts during World War II by lending their yachts to the Navy for service in what veterans fondly called the "hooligan" Navy, duty on submarine or coastal patrol. Hal Roach's *Gypsy*, Dana Andrews's *Vileehi*, Sterling Hayden's *Oretha F. Spinney*, and Stan Laurel's *Nada III* were all used by the Navy. Humphrey Bogart's *Sluggo* served in the Coast Guard auxiliary out of Newport Beach during the war.

Movie stars, as well as movie moguls or their studios, were likely to own more than one yacht, and various yachts were owned by different stars at different times, as was the case with Humphrey Bogart, who owned *Sluggo* and *Santana*, John Barrymore, who owned *Mariner* and *Infanta*, Errol Flynn, who owned *Sirocco* and *Zaca*, Jack L. Warner, who owned *Southwind*, which was formerly owned by George Brent. Some stars unfortunately lost their vessels through bankruptcy, as did John Barrymore and John Gilbert, who owned *Mariner* and *Temptress* respectively. Under ownership of MGM, *Mariner* was later involved in a criminal investigation as a result of the death of one of its seamen, who was washed overboard during the filming of *Captains Courageous*. This was only one of the many unusual incidents that often led to litigation in the United States District Court in Los Angeles.

Civil cases of patent, copyright, and trademark infringement, breach of contract, and other civil matters involving the film industry and movie stars were fairly typical, but there were criminal cases as well. Errol Flynn was sued by the federal government for damage to a Navy vessel caused by his throwing overboard unwanted items from his yacht *Sirocco*. Randolph Scott was sued by an individual

from another state who alleged deliberate bodily harm when he was hit by a golf ball at the Riviera County Club. Clara Bow was involved in a widely publicized case about moral turpitude, and Charlie Chaplin was charged with violations against the Mann Act, a federal law of 1910 that prohibited the interstate transportation of women for "immoral purposes."

Even reclusive Howard Hughes had to sign affidavits in a court case because of a suit alleging patent infringement for aerial sequences in his movie *Hells Angels* that had been used earlier in the silent movie *Da'vn Patrol*. Cole Porter and Irving Berlin fought copyright lawsuits practically every time they published a new song. Dashiell Hammett was sued by Columbia Broadcasting for exclusive rights to the use of the name "Sam Spade" after the networks purchased his book *The Maltese Falcon*, for the movie starring Humphrey Bogart. Hammett, however, was able to retain the rights to use the name Sam Spade in future publications, which he did. Constance Bennett, Jean Simmons, Stewart Granger, and Rita Hayworth were all involved in litigation resulting from contract disputes. Tom Mix and Betty Davis had to appear in court to answer allegations of tax evasion. Alfred Hitchcock found himself charged with violations of the Migratory Bird Act during the filming of *The Birds*. Even little Shirley Temple was sued by the "Hays Office," a private organization that assumed for itself the right to police motion pictures to root out "indecentcy."

Many former stars did not fare well after their popularity waned, and their declines also generated additional public records that have found their way into the National Archives. Johnny Weissmuller, Peter Lorre, Raymond Burr, John Barrymore, and numerous others, for example, found themselves in federal bankruptcy court in southern California.

What is especially important is that the records suitable for the study of the glamorous can also be used to study everyday people in general, and family information in particular. One does not have to be a millionaire or a movie star to own a yacht. One does not have to be a scientist to file a patent for an invention. One does not have to be a professional musician to write a song. One of the most popular hobbies today is the search for one's family history, or "roots." This surge in popularity can be attributed to Alex Haley's best-seller *Roots* and to two particular television series. The 1970s miniseries, "Roots," based on Haley's book, popularized family history, and Ken Burns's late-1980s PBS miniseries, "The Civil War," personalized historic events for the viewing audience.

Most people who start a sojourn into genealogy soon learn that it is a never-ending pursuit. Although

Errol Flynn on board his yacht, *Zaca*, ca. 1946. Photo donated to the National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region by Suzanne Dewberry. Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region.



I am not a professional genealogist, I have worked with many different types of federal, state, and local records in search of my family's history, and I have an idea of what is available for research. The fact of the matter is that many people know only a smidgeon of their early family history and tend to start their research at a point too far back in time to be able to prove their relationship to that family. I made that very mistake. It cost me dearly in both wasted time and effort, since my initial search began not only in the wrong city and county, but in the wrong state as well.

Although I had had no prior training in genealogy before working at the National Archives, as part of my training, I was given a beginner's assignment and instructed to find a member of my own family in the 1900 federal manuscript census, the most recent one open at that time.<sup>2</sup> I had limited options on which family to search, since I had been told that both my mother's and father's families immigrated in the early twentieth century, and thus would not have appeared on the 1900 census. I thought I could more readily find my husband's grandfather in the state where I believed the family had originated. I

spent my time searching the census, page by page, in the county and town where I thought the family would be, but found not one single person with a similar surname. Giving up in frustration, I finally went to the trained desk attendant and asked what I had done wrong. She suggested that I use the Soundex (a sound indexing system), which would save a great deal of time. I was shown how to code the family surname properly and how to gain access to the correct rolls of film, and I was on my way—or so I thought. The Soundex provided cards, arranged first by code and then alphabetically by first name, for every family group in the state of Alabama, where I thought the ancestors should be. The *right* family, however, was not there. I decided then that genealogy was too frustrating. I was extremely bothered by the fact that a system established to aid research could make me feel so defeated.

Curiosity got the better of me, and after work that evening, I called my husband's father to get more details. It turned out that in 1900 the family I was looking for had been in Georgia, not in Alabama, where they would move later. I did not even have





Hal Roach, Sr., on board his yacht *Gypsy*, ca. 1922. Photo donated to the National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region by Hal Roach, Jr.  
*Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region.*

the correct first names, just nicknames. By the time I reported for work the next day, I had charted out the families as far back as this "hearsay" information would allow. This included birthdates and places, approximate marriage dates, and dates and places of death. In other words, I began to get organized. Upon arrival at work the next day, I tried again. Within fifteen minutes, I had found the right family on the census and was able to travel back in time through the 1880 federal census using the same Soundex system. From then on, I was bitten by the "genie" bug.

Once I achieved my initial goal of finding primary families in the censuses, I was ready to take the next step by writing to various state and local agencies in order to gain access to non-federal vital records. It was one thing to have information about individuals from a census, but it was another to prove

that the information was accurate. I began by writing to local governments for birth, death, and marriage records, thinking that was the right thing to do. More often than not, a return letter stated that the county hall of records or the court house had burned down sometime in the past, and there were no records for the period requested.

My letter-writing campaign proving unfruitful, I changed strategies. Many local libraries have a genealogical-society or historical-group affiliation that often provides volunteer assistance and raises money to acquire books useful for genealogy. When I had an opportunity to visit my local genealogical society library, I was amazed at the extensive collection of books containing information that readily filled gaps on my family ancestry chart. There were books, arranged by state, on such topics as county probate records, registers of marriages, DAR

ages, regimental military histories, family histories, abstracts of genealogical information gleaned from newspapers, passenger arrival lists, and on and on. I became so focused on finding new leads in those published resources that I had not realized that the lights in the research room had been turned off.

One of the best pieces of advice ever given to me was that in order to start a genealogical search properly, you should always start with yourself. It was years of doing genealogy before I realized that I had no adequate proof of who I was, nor did my husband. I wrote to the State Department of Vital Statistics in the state where I was born and was provided with a certified copy of my birth certificate. I then wrote to the state of California Vital Records Department for a copy of my husband's and daughter's birth records, making sure that we had a complete record for each of us. I could not believe my good fortune when the documents arrived so quickly. One of the biggest surprises of my life, however, was to find out that my husband's last name was not the same as I now know it. Having a copy of your own birth certificate is important for many reasons, including Social Security benefits, but especially if you wish to acquire a passport to travel abroad.

Serendipity and luck play as much a role in many successful genealogy searches as does good research strategy, because most genealogists will confess to having found a peculiar gap in their lineage. This gap can cause years of consternation, and I had one such situation. After years of writing letters, going to libraries, talking with relatives, even taking workshops on research techniques and strategies, I still had an unlinkable line. One unforgettable day a woman walked into the Regional Archives to do research. I could not believe my eyes; she looked so much like my aunt in New England that she could have been her twin. I asked her where she came from, and with a crisp New England accent, she indicated the Boston area, in the same town where my aunt lives. During the course of the conversation, we found that we were related by having the same grandparents, who had hailed from Nova Scotia. In less than five minutes, she was able to resolve my missing link problem and make the right connection, taking my family history back in time to 1593 in France.

The profusion of resources available for beginning genealogists working on their family history is quite daunting if one does not know how to begin the search. Federal records consist primarily of census, military, passenger arrival and immigration, citizenship and naturalization, or government land records, held by the Regional Archives of the National Archives near Los Angeles and San Francisco. The Regional Archives are responsible for

both preserving the historically valuable original records created by federal agencies in their regions, and maintaining large collections of federal records on microfilm. Most of the collections are microfilm copies of original records held by the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and are vital for doing genealogical research.

Be aware, when you request an ancestor's pension record for the Civil War era, that no pensions were issued to Confederate soldiers by the federal government. In my excitement of actually finding an ancestor in the index, I forgot that he was a Confederate from Alabama and was therefore not entitled to any benefits. I did learn later that southern states issued pensions to former soldiers, but it was a lesson I had to learn the hard way.

Land records are generally found in one of two places. If the land was homesteaded in a public-domain state such as California, records of the homestead application are likely to be found in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The Regional Archives, both in northern and southern California, maintain patent registers, which may serve as indexes to the applications. The archives centers maintain survey plat maps as well. The first title to land sold by the government to an individual is called a patent. Thereafter, if an individual sells the land to another party it is called a deed. Deeds are registered at the county seat where the land existed and title to the property was transferred.

Land records of the Mexican period exist in several places. The original decree register exists at the National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region because it was maintained by the United States District Court in Los Angeles. Mexican land-grant papers, including extant *expedientes* and *diseños*, are located at the Bancroft Library in Berkeley and at the State Archives in Sacramento. Original surveyors' diaries and other papers are at the Huntington Library in San Marino.


Many other nationally known institutions throughout California are also important resources for genealogical research. The Family History Centers of the Church of the Latter Day Saints have copies of almost all genealogically important microfilm produced by the National Archives. They also have microfilm copies of family histories and genealogically important books, many of which are no longer in print. The Sutro Library, a branch of the California State Library, in San Francisco, has a wonderful book-lending program. University libraries, both in special collections and in history and public document sections, have books relating to military regimental histories, state and community histories, and biographies of important people.

The National Archives, the Regional Archives, the California State Archives, the California State Library,





Photographs of Thomas J. Smith and Emalia Emory (Emma) Howell Smith, ca. 1862, from original tin-types found in the attic of the Dewberry home in Standing Rock, Alabama. Thomas J. Smith, born April 19, 1830, served the Confederacy in both the 10th Regiment, Alabama volunteer Cavalry, and the 59th Regiment, Alabama Infantry, during the Civil War. He died on September 1, 1862, of typhoid fever in Atlanta, Georgia. Emma Smith, born June 8, 1836, lived until 1901 and is buried next to her husband at Harmony Methodist Church Cemetery in East Vernon, Georgia. Although this is a black and white reproduction, colorized copies of the original tin-type indicate that the uniform worn by Thomas Smith in the photograph was blue rather than gray. *Courtesy Suzanne Dewberry.*

county archives, college and university libraries, and local community libraries and genealogical societies are rich in genealogical resources. If you plan well, know what resources are available, and organize and chart your known facts, your genealogical search will not only be successful, but it will provide a lifelong appreciation for history and for the institutions that are preserving important genealogical records for you and for future generations. You will need a great deal of patience and luck, the tenacity of Sherlock Holmes, and an openness to having unexpected, serendipitous adventures. 

*See notes beginning on page 107.*

*Suzanne Dewberry is the assistant director of the National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region. She received a B.A. in history from California State University, Fullerton, and has published articles in the National Archives quarterly journal Prologue, the occasional publication The Record, and the San Diego Journal of History. She recently received an award from the Federal Executive Board in Los Angeles for her reference work.*

## TWO FAMILIES OF TEACHERS

### Personal Stories and Family Histories in Manuscript Collections

by Lynn A. Bonfield

Hundreds of family life stories are documented in manuscript collections preserved in repositories across California. They can be found in special collections at public libraries, universities, historical societies, museums, and any institution or organization that collects historical documents. These epics can be read in letters and diaries, heard on oral history tapes, and seen in documentary films. They tell of heroic struggles in working the land in mining and agriculture, of exciting innovations in industry and business, of collective work in life partnerships and community action.

Personal narratives give specific meaning to the general historical realities of existence. The first-hand experiences of those who lived in a different time provide researchers with a compellingly intimate glimpse into the past. Often these personal manuscripts were written for restricted eyes, and therefore they reveal more of life's private details than do printed works. Researchers using personal papers play the role of voyeurs, and the challenge often is to place the family story in historical context while retaining the original intent, as well as the indigenious charm. A look at the life stories of two families follows, using primary sources from California manuscript repositories.

#### THE WALBRIDGE-RIX FAMILY: FROM VERMONT TO CALIFORNIA

According to their shared diary now at the California Historical Society, two teachers—Chastina Walbridge and Alfred Rix—were married on July 29, 1849, in a village church in northern Vermont. At the time it was unusual for New England couples to be married in church; most often the minister came to the home of the father of the bride for a brief ceremony.<sup>1</sup> White dresses for brides were just becoming fashionable, and Chastina with the help of her sister Sarah had made her "dress of white muslin, plain, with the exception of some blonde about the neck &

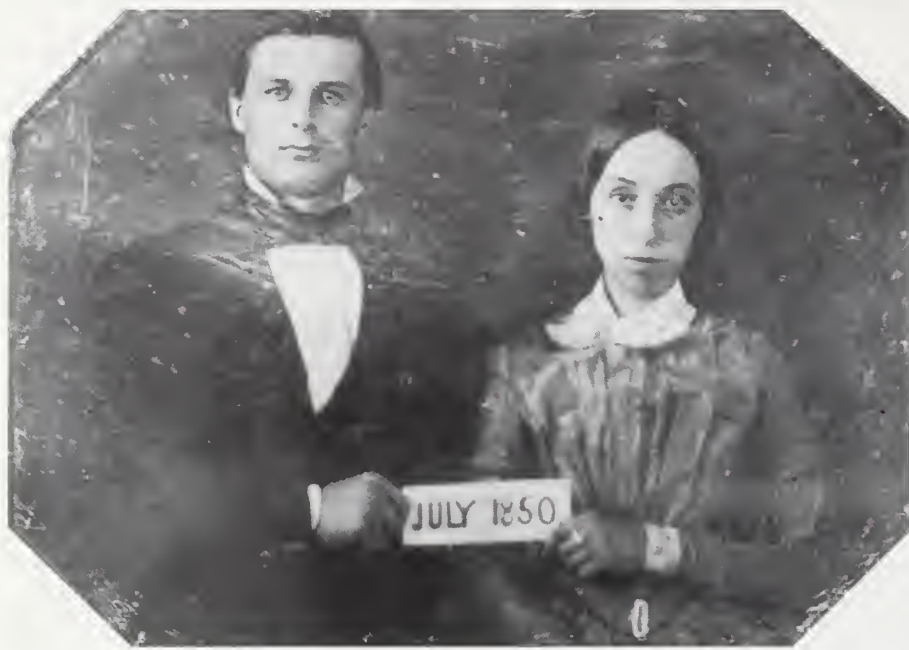
lace sleeves. She [Alfred is writing this] had about her waist a white satin sash. This, with a white crape [sic] shawl & bonnet, completed the outside attire of the bride." On the Saturday before the wedding, Alfred had "slipped a half eagle" into the hand of the minister. On the wedding day, he borrowed a carriage and drove his bride to the church, accompanied by her sister and brother, who served as witnesses. After the service, the family and some friends went to the farm of Chastina's stepfather, where Chastina's mother, Roxana, had "tables spread and a good wedding feast was neatly laid upon the cloth."<sup>2</sup>

Discreetly writing in third person in their diary, Alfred described their wedding night with this phrase from Shakespeare: "After life's fitful fever they slept well!" The following morning "Tina" and "Alf," as they called each other, journeyed to the home of Alfred's parents in New Hampshire. Honeymoons or trips taken solely by the newly married couple did not become common for twenty years.

Family letters and diaries detail the daily events of life, but to fill in the story of Chastina and Alfred, researchers must go to other sources. By studying vital records at the Vermont town clerk offices of Wolcott and Peacham, for example, they can learn of the death of Chastina's father in 1835 and Roxana's remarriage five years later. They can study the guardianship papers of all the Walbridge children, including Chastina, at the probate office of the Caledonia County courthouse in St. Johnsbury. They can look at documents on Alfred's college career, 1844–1848, in the archives of the University of Vermont. They can see the catalogs of the Peacham (Vermont) Academy, where Tina and Alf studied, at the Peacham Historical Association.

Three and a half years after their wedding, the Rixes were living in California. Alfred had come via Nicaragua in October 1851 as part of a large company of Vermont men seeking gold. Failing in the mines, he retreated to San Francisco and became the first public school teacher in the district known as





Alfred S. Rix and Chastina Walbridge Rix on their first anniversary, 1850. Daguerreotype taken in Danville, Vermont. In 1851 Alfred caught gold fever and came to California; Chastina followed two years later. California Historical Society Library, San Francisco.

the Mission. His appointment was noted in the *San Francisco Bulletin*, and in letters to Chastina he described his attempts to learn Spanish.<sup>3</sup>

In January 1853, Chastina and their young son Julian left Vermont to join Alfred. To reach the Pacific, they sailed from New York and crossed the Isthmus of Panama, called "the dreaded Isthmus" by many women who made the trip.<sup>4</sup> Newspaper reports of their voyage, giving the dates and number of passengers, were published in the *St. Johnsbury (VT) Caledonian*, as well as in the *San Francisco Herald*. In addition, Chastina wrote three versions of her one-month trip from Vermont to California. To her mother and family "back home," she wrote several letters describing the new sights of ocean waves and the Isthmus plant life. In a small diary she kept on her person, Chastina recorded in brief entries the events of the day, such as the food they were served, and the new people she met, including her first view of "blacks," whom she found "kind & smart too."<sup>5</sup> In this diary she listed all the expenses on the trip in order of payment—her steamer ticket was \$305 and apparently she did not need a ticket for two-year-old Julian. She paid fourteen dollars to have Julian carried by a native on the one-day journey over the mountains to Panama City, and twenty-five dollars for the mule she rode. After she arrived in San Francisco, Chastina summarized the trip in the shared diary she and Alfred had begun on their wedding day. This had been shipped around the Cape in her trunk full of linens and arrived two months after she did.

It is unusual to have three primary sources for the

same event, and in this case, comparing them gives the researcher insights into Chastina's character. Her letters to her mother expressed assurances that she and Julian were well.<sup>6</sup> She kept her pocket diary to record the facts she would not want to forget, and she used it as a confidante or friend to help assuage her loneliness. The third version of her story was penned in their joint diary, in which she emphasized the hardships and dangers they experienced. This version was the one Alfred would read; Chastina wanted him to know how she had suffered and all she had "endured" to take this long journey without him.<sup>7</sup>

Once in San Francisco, both Chastina and Alfred wrote letters back to Vermont; some of these letters now can be found in the Edward A. Rix Collection at the Bancroft Library. Among the documents is a drawing of the layout of the house the Rixes had built at 5th and Market in San Francisco at the end of 1854. Chastina pointed out the back yard, which "is perfect" for her and the neighbor women to "have a good chance to 'gab' when we wish."<sup>8</sup> In addition to letters by the Rixes, researchers can read letters Chastina's mother in Vermont wrote to her oldest daughter's family in Michigan, recounting events, but most importantly adding her own feelings.

Chastina lived only two years in the house in which she took such pride. She died unexpectedly in 1857. Roxana wrote from Vermont to her granddaughter in Michigan that Chastina's "complaint was such as frequently happens to married women."<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, the details are missing, because the let-

The Rix home on the north side of Market Street, between Kearny and Montgomery, San Francisco, 1855, by photographer Robert H. Vance. At the front door are Alfred and Chastina with their sons Julian and Edward on the sidewalk. On the balcony are Chastina's sister Clara and brother Dustan. The other two men are Alfred's brothers, Oscar and Hale, with Hale's wife, Alice Locke. *California Historical Society Library, San Francisco.*



ter Alfred no doubt wrote describing Chastina's death is not in the family papers. It sometimes happens that an important letter researchers know once existed has not survived. Maybe Roxana carried Alfred's letter with her until she could let go and accept the death of her beloved daughter. Maybe she grieved so deeply over the news that she destroyed the letter. Maybe she sent it to a family member who placed it in a Bible rather than adding it to the other family letters. Historians enjoy speculating about missing documents, never losing hope that they will appear in the next batch of discoveries.

Chastina was buried in Laurel Hill Cemetery, but when San Francisco voted to move the pioneer cemetery and develop the land, her body was removed to Oakland in 1940 to be interred next to her son Edward. Researchers can find Chastina's burial records at Cypress Lawn in Colma.

Alfred went on to have a successful law practice, as evidenced by the legal documents at the Society of California Pioneers' library and the Bancroft Library. Their oldest son, Julian Walbridge Rix, became a noted landscape artist, and reviews of his work and reports of his sketching trips are found in both San Francisco and New York newspapers. One letter Julian wrote shortly before his death in 1903 gives a brief sketch of his life. Written at the request of the curator of the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and today is part of that museum's

holdings, this letter makes no mention of Julian's early years in California. This has resulted in many erroneous short biographies of his life. Their second son, Edward, graduated in 1877 from "Cal,"—as the University of California, Berkeley, was called then—a member of the first class of the College of Mechanics. He became a nationally recognized mechanical engineer, earning thirty-five U.S. patents.

The nineteenth-century westward movement scattered many New England families. This is a boon for archivists, historians, and genealogists. Letter writing was the only way to keep in touch with parents and siblings, and since most New Englanders were literate by mid-century, they wrote regularly. The Rix family was not unusual in the number of letters they wrote; what was unusual was that descendants kept the letters, diaries, photographs, and other historical documents. Some eventually placed them in libraries in California, Minnesota, and Vermont. Others continue to preserve them in their homes, enjoying ownership even though archivists have encouraged them to donate the material to a library where it would be more widely available and properly preserved. These family members often feel that their family story is so personal that it would be an injustice to have others read the letters. It is the job of archivists to educate these potential donors about the importance of primary sources open to all researchers interested in understanding the past.



THE FOREMAN-COLE FAMILY:  
A FAMILY OF "FIRSTS" IN SAN FRANCISCO

Before World War II and the influx of people who worked in the shipyards and other wartime industries, San Francisco had a small population of African Americans, usually estimated at less than five thousand. Historians have noted that the group developed "a rather elaborate class hierarchy," with class distinctions that "provided status and prestige to black San Franciscans, who were otherwise ignored by the larger society."<sup>10</sup>

A good example of this black elite is the Foreman family, whose little-known story can be traced through records in San Francisco libraries. Joseph Foreman had migrated from Kentucky at the turn of the century. He soon became one of the most recognized African American social figures in San Francisco, as the popular doorman at Shreve's, where he began working in 1909 and continued for forty-six years. He was known affectionately as "Joe Shreve," and columnist Herb Caen in the *San Francisco Chronicle* remembers Foreman "reigning like a king at Post and Grant streets." Later Caen wrote, "I can't remember an important social function in the past decade that has not been graced with his presence. An imposing figure, straight as an arrow in his beautiful tailored uniform, he adds the final touch of class to any event."<sup>11</sup>

Joe's wife, Elizabeth Brown Foreman, was a homemaker and active member of Bethel A.M.E. Church. She had been born in San Francisco on Pixley Street, educated in the public schools, and after completing the ninth grade, worked as a receptionist. On an office errand one day, she saw Joseph Foreman, who at the time was the doorman at St. Dunstan Hotel, but her social mores prohibited her from speaking to him without a formal introduction, which was eventually arranged.

They later married and had two daughters who both became teachers. The oldest, Josephine, was interviewed in the oral history project sponsored by the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, "Afro-Americans in San Francisco prior to World War II." She described her parents and their influence on her. Of her father she said:

[My father] was a gentleman in the highest sense of the word. He was the same at home as he was in the public. He treated us [my mother, sister, and me] as if we were royalty.... I don't think he ever raised his voice. I never heard him swear, although I know he could because he had been in the Philippine Islands with the civilian army after the Spanish-American War. He was a very scholarly man although he'd only had about three years of schooling in a little dirt-floor school back in Kentucky.... And he didn't drink; he didn't carouse.... He loved people. If he'd seen

you now—ten years later he'd remember your name. Everybody loved him.... He was the time-keeper for the Polo Club and the Greeter for the Seals baseball.<sup>12</sup>

Josephine thought he was "too good to be true."

Josephine's mother, Elizabeth, took the role of the strict disciplinarian in the family, expecting excellence from her two daughters at all times. Josephine remembered her as

a very strong-willed, stern, high-principled, one-man woman of impeccable moral character. Rather censorious of people who weren't up to those standards. She didn't touch a drop to drink and she didn't want any done in the house either. She was very, very strict. She didn't allow us [Josephine and her younger sister] to go to any dances that were paid admission, because her credo was that "anybody" could get in them.... She had very high ambitions. She said, "Girls, you're both girls and you're Colored (those were the words we used then) so you're going to have to do *twice* as much to get *half* of what the Whites have."<sup>13</sup>

Josephine and her sister did well in school, went to Girls' High School, and then to the University of California, Berkeley. Josephine remembered family friends asking her father, "What are you educating those girls for, Joe? They're only going to get married." He would reply, "My girls are my wealth and they're going to get *everything* that I can place before them. They won't have to work in anybody's kitchen."<sup>14</sup> Josephine recalled that of all their black friends, "we were the only ones that went to college—for years and years." Most families, she remarked, "saved up their money and sent them [their daughters] to Washington, D.C., and other places to find husbands." Her father took a day off work to take her and her sister to Berkeley; this was Josephine's first trip there and they went on the ferry—"the bridge was being built." In a talk at San Francisco State in 1988, Josephine said her mother "never batted an eyelash when [her girls] made Phi Beta Kappa. It was expected."<sup>15</sup>

Josephine described the social life in San Francisco for middle-class African Americans, the importance of the churches, and finally, "the best thing that ever happened to us as an ethnic group." She was referring to the war and the arrival of thousands of African Americans from all over the United States:

What the heck did we have [before then]? We didn't have anybody on the Police Commission or any other city commission. My father was one of the big big shots—and with all due respect to his memory, and I adore him and he was a great man and he made any position dignified—but he was a *doorman*! Which is not what you'd call the highest career aspi-

ration. Walter Sandford, who was the other big shot [African American] in the city, was the mayor's chauffeur and page. And everybody else who was supposedly in a good position worked for Metropolitan Life Insurance—in the kitchen or in the restaurant part...Many of the Blacks who came in [to San Francisco during World War II] had degrees. They were doctors or lawyers or professionally-trained people. This began to give us not only the strength in numbers, but some clout.

Josephine became the first African American hired by the San Francisco School District. In 1944 she passed the written and oral exams to be a teacher, but the Board of Education did not know where to place her, or even if they should. Because she was at the top of the civil service list, some decision had to be made, for the delay "was really stopping the war effort."<sup>17</sup> Finally Josephine was assigned to Raphael Weill Elementary School. A few years later, another battle ensued when she wanted to teach high school, but in 1948, she began at Balboa High School, where she taught until 1963.

She was not the only one in her family to be a "first." In 1941 she married Audley Cole, who in 1944 became the first black San Francisco motorman for the Municipal Railroad System. He took the civil service exam without identifying himself as an African American. When he passed, "they had to hire him," Josephine explained in a speech she gave years later at San Francisco State.<sup>18</sup>

The actual story is much more complicated, as told by historian Albert S. Broussard in his book *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954*. Cole had to fight the local Carmen's Union, officially called the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway, and Motor Coach Employees of America, Division 518, AFL, who refused to allow its members to train black workers. However, with the support of the Fair Employment Practice Committee's (FEPC) Regional Office, who carried out federal regulations against racial discrimination in the work place, the newly-formed Bay Area Council against Discrimination (BACD), and the well-established National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Cole was finally admitted to the Carmen's Union. Also taking an active role was the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), who supported Cole's right to work as a motorman and condemned the actions of the Carmen's Union. Following Cole's victory, many African Americans became employed on San Francisco buses.<sup>19</sup>

Researchers wanting the full story of the Foreman-Cole family will use the oral history interview of Josephine Foreman Cole done in 1978. Oral history is a useful tool for gathering information about the



Josephine and Audley Cole  
on their wedding day in 1941, San Francisco.  
Courtesy Josephine Foreman Cole.

lives of individuals, families, and communities. It provides stories often omitted in personal writings and the commercial press, and it furnishes documentation where little exists.

These are small parts of two California family stories. Many more are being collected and preserved by archivists and librarians in special collections all over the state.

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See notes beginning on page 107

An archivist for more than thirty years, Lynn A. Boufield has been director of the Labor Archives and Research Center at San Francisco State University since its founding in 1985. Previously she has worked at the Harvard University Archives, Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe, Urban Archives at Temple University, and the California Historical Society. She is the co-author of *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth-Century Vermont Family* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1995).



## WORLDS OF LEISURE, WORLDS OF GRACE

### Recreation, Entertainment, and the Arts in the California Experience

*by Peter J. Blodgett and Sara S. Hodson*

In the century and a half that has elapsed since its admission into the United States, California has exerted an increasingly powerful psychological influence on the national culture. As destination, inspiration, and location of a host of cultural and recreational activities and creative individuals during the last one hundred fifty years, the Golden State has drawn the attention of the nation and world. Today, a rich documentary record about these activities and individuals resides in California's libraries, museums, and archives. The thousands of letters, diaries, and other manuscripts that comprise this record illuminate the evolution of the arts, recreation, and entertainment in California and their burgeoning impact both within the state and beyond its borders.

Even before the region's absorption into the American republic, California's remarkable array of natural settings challenged, provoked, and seduced the intellects and emotions of inhabitants and visitors alike, until extolling the aesthetic and spiritual benefits of the state's spectacular natural landscapes became one of the unifying themes of California history. As Kevin Starr has noted in describing the landscape encountered by newcomers, "It was not a subtle drama, but a bold confrontation of flatland, mountain and valley."<sup>1</sup> After the American conquest, the first great influx of population, arriving in the wake of the 1848 gold discovery, held the spectacular contrasts of topography in low esteem, seeking only to overcome the geographic obstacles thrown in its path to fortune. Only the participants in what Starr has characterized as the "literary tourism" that began in the 1850s spoke with the same enthusiasm about California's scenic magnificence that others reserved for its mineral wealth.

Such enthusiastic reactions to California's natural wonders contrasted with the general indifference or hostility of most Euro-Americans toward untamed nature. Among a growing number of upper-class Americans, however, the passionate descriptions by

those articulate excursionists of California's scenic splendor struck a responsive chord. Influenced by evolving aesthetic standards that emphasized the beauty inherent in wild places, these Americans grew increasingly sympathetic to favorable descriptions of untrammeled landscapes. In time, more and more of them succumbed to appeals intended to lure them out to the undeveloped West as tourists. Transcontinental railroads, in search of passengers, and western entrepreneurs, seeking patrons or investors, collaborated in this new advertising venture.

With its abundance of scenic wonders, California rapidly assumed a role as one of the most attractive destinations for the burgeoning tourism industry. By the 1870s, Charles Nordhoff, author of one of the leading guidebooks for California-bound tourists, could proclaim that "certainly in no part of the continent is pleasure-traveling so exquisite and unalloyed a pleasure as in California."<sup>2</sup> Within a decade, the Boston firm of Raymond & Whitcomb was dispatching all-expense-paid, escorted parties of tourists on three-week expeditions across the great expanses of the Far West to California to see this terrestrial paradise for themselves. Once there, most of them chose to make the pilgrimage to one particularly Edenic corner: the Yosemite Valley.

Although a familiar haunt for centuries to many of the Indian inhabitants of the southern Sierra Nevada, Yosemite Valley had only been glimpsed on occasion by wandering Euro-American fur trappers and prospectors before 1850. Only in the spring of 1851 did the first sustained Euro-American contact commence. Yosemite's first tourists proved to be a party of California militiamen who entered the valley in 1851 chasing an Indian band that had rejected relocation to reservation land out of the mountains. While a small population of Indians would persist in the valley through the nineteenth century, they effectively had been dispossessed as its masters within a very few years.



Jack London posed with his horse, at his Valley of the Moon Ranch, Sonoma, ca. 1910.  
*Courtesy Huntington Library.*

As this process of dispossession had unfolded, word about the valley's stunning visual richness began to spread as well. Before the end of the 1850s, thanks in large part to the labors of the astute English-born promoter James Mason Hutchings, the Yosemite was already being integrated into a different American cultural world view. Hutchings, who had conducted the first party of recreational visitors into the valley in 1855, also had brought the first artist, Thomas Ayres, and wrote one of the first widely circulated descriptions of its beauty. In less than ten years, travel to the valley began to lose its exotic dimension, while the valley's reputation penetrated deeper and deeper into the popular imagination. The emphasis placed upon the natural glories of Yosemite in the travel literature of the 1860s and 1870s soon made it synonymous with California itself.

As this fascination with the beauty of spectacular natural places held an ever firmer grip on the public's consciousness, it is not surprising, therefore, to find in one 1882 traveler's diary the rhapsodic proclamation that she had realized "one of the greatest

desires of my life, a trip to the Yosemite Valley." That year, Amy Bridges, a young woman from Hopkinton, Massachusetts, and several other members of her family set out by train as part of a Raymond & Whitcomb transcontinental excursion. Intrigued or awed by much of the unfamiliar scenery unfolding beyond the passenger-car window, she seemed to fall most fully under the spell of this one special destination: "How often have I longed to see this far famed spot and when a child, planned how I should visit this beautiful valley."<sup>4</sup> Delivered to Madera by the railroad from San Francisco and then consigned to a stagecoach for the rest of the trip, Miss Bridges endured the long journey with good humored but barely restrained eagerness. Descending at last into the valley, she suddenly found her dream take physical form as the coach slipped out of the mist to encounter "a beautiful rainbow and the blue sky...above us [and] the sun...bright behind us. Oh, it was glorious." Lodged in the celebrated "Big Tree Room" of the Cedar Cottage at the Yosemite Falls Hotel, she and her companions, "sat and warmed ourselves and listened to the adventures of those





Transcontinental tours, such as the one enjoyed by Amy Bridges, proved highly popular with affluent Americans during the late nineteenth century. The cover of an 1884 Raymond and Whitcomb excursion guidebook, shown here, promises a "grand trip," with a 73-day itinerary that included stops in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, the Pacific Coast states, and British Columbia, with supplementary trips to Alaska and Yellowstone, if desired. The cost, \$560, or roughly \$8 per day, included "all travelling and hotel expenses."

*Courtesy Huntington Library.*

who had spent a day or two [in the valley already]." For the next three days, the duration of the side trip allowed for by the Raymond & Whitcomb schedule, her party toured the sights. Ever the brash enthusiast, she confessed to her diary that upon viewing the reflection in Mirror Lake, "I was so overjoyed I couldn't help prancing about a little when no one was looking." Riding up to the summit of Glacier Point, she observed with wonder that "as we went further up the view grew more beautiful, every bend added some fresh charm." Summing up with great zeal her expedition through the valley, she admitted at one point that "I have called everything beautiful and grand, I know no other adjectives for this."<sup>5</sup> Thus, like so many other visitors to the valley in the early era of Yosemite tourism, she found herself overwhelmed by the emotional impact of the experience of wild, scenic nature.

Bursting with delight over this exposure to unspoiled nature, Miss Bridges and her family nonetheless had chosen to indulge as travelers in the insulated comfort promised by Raymond & Whitcomb to their patrons. The company's tour books assured the curious (or anxious) reader that "Every comfort and luxury attainable will be provided, and every effort will be made to render the journey enjoyable to the participants." Whether tourists were going to San Francisco, the Yosemite, British Columbia, or the far north of Alaska, the operators promised them that, through the agency of the tour conductor, they "will be relieved of the many petty cares and annoyances inseparable from ordinary travel. Thus

the traveler will be left to the fullest enjoyment of the journey."<sup>6</sup>

Lodged within the Huntington Library's extensive holdings of manuscript and printed Californiana, the Bridges diary and the 1884 Raymond & Whitcomb tour book represent only two examples of a much greater body of writings on the tourist's experience of the Golden State and the larger transformation of American culture in the nineteenth century. Other manuscript diaries kept by Raymond & Whitcomb excursionists (including a second one kept by Amy Bridges in 1887) and by other tourists describe earlier or later transcontinental travels, trips along the Pacific Coast, or voyages to Yosemite. The library also possesses a splendid body of printed works, beginning with such early travel books as Nordhoff's *California for Travelers and Settlers*, George Crofutt's *New Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast Guide* (Chicago, 1878), A. L. Bancroft's tourist guide, *Yosemite, San Francisco and Around the Bay* (San Francisco, 1871), John Conway's *Tourist's Guide from the Yosemite Valley to Eagle Peak, for the Spring and Summer of 1879* (San Francisco, 1879), and W.E. Dennison's *Information for the Use of Yosemite Visitors* (Sacramento, 1886), as well as such renowned volumes as Josiah Dwight Whitney's *The Yosemite Book* (published in 1868 by Julius Bien in New York under the auspices of the California Geological Survey), and James M. Hutchings's *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California* (San Francisco, 1860). Of a more ephemeral nature but of equal significance as documentary sources about the history of recreational California are the hundreds

of broadsides, posters, trade cards, pamphlets, brochures, and post cards promoting everything from Leidig's Hotel or the Cosmopolitan Saloon in Yosemite Valley to the Mount Lowe Scenic Railway or Cawston's Ostrich Farm in southern California.

In addition to travelers like Amy Bridges who remarked upon the natural wonders of the Golden State, California's authors have also recorded their own perceptions of its unique landscapes. Authors as diverse as John Muir, Mary Austin, Robinson Jeffers, Joan Didion, and Wallace Stegner have portrayed the land itself, along with the stories of the people who inhabit it. Although he is known more for his Klondike and South Seas adventures and the novels and tales based on them, Jack London must be added to this list for his evocation of the California lands he loved.

Despite the popular perception of Jack London as the perpetual wanderer/adventurer, he not only spent much of his youth and young manhood in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay area, he also lived for much of the last decade of his life on his Beauty Ranch in the Sonoma hills near Glen Ellen. Why did he acquire the hundreds of acres that comprised the ranch by the time of his death, and what did the land mean to him? How did he operate the ranch while still traveling and writing vast quantities of fiction?

By 1905, London had reached a crossroads in his life and career. Just thirty years old, he was already a famous and successful author. He had a solid and lengthy list of published stories to his credit, and two of his best-known novels, *The Call of the Wild* and *The Sea Wolf*, had just been published in 1903, to immediate popular success and critical acclaim. However, success seemed hollow in light of the failures of his personal life. By 1904, his first wife, Bessie, had filed for divorce, and, although London had fallen in love with Charmian, whom he would later marry, he was not free yet. To escape the pressures of his situation, he fled to Japan to cover the Russo-Japanese War as a correspondent. To these factors were added his experiences in 1902 in England, where the hellish poverty of London's East End (experiences published in *The People of the Abyss*) fueled his desire to leave city life for nature's peace in the countryside.

Driven by these experiences, Jack London searched for just the right parcel of California land to match his dreams. When he had found it in the early summer of 1905, he wrote to his editor George Brett at Macmillan to describe the land and to plead for the funds to complete the purchase: "Now I'll tell you what I have done and what I want. I have found

the land I want, and have closed the deal by paying \$500.00, binding the bargain for a few days, when I must pay the balance, \$6,500.00. There are 130 acres in the place, and they are 130 acres of the most beautiful, primitive land to be found anywhere in California. There are great redwoods on it, some of them thousands of years old—in fact, the redwoods are as fine and magnificent as any to be found anywhere outside the tourist groves. Also there are great firs, tan-bark oaks, maples, live-oaks, white-oaks, black-oaks, madrone and manzanita galore. There are canyons, several streams of water, many springs, etc., etc. In fact, it is impossible to really describe the place. All I can say is this—I have been over California off and on all my life, for the last two months I have been riding all over these hills, looking for just such a place, and I must say that I have never seen anything like it."

From this idyllic description, it is clear that London saw the land as a place of beauty, peace, and escape. The depth to which he felt newly drawn to the land is also evident in his writing at the time. The story he completed just as he was buying the ranch, "All Gold Canyon," contains some of his most beautiful descriptions of the pastoral landscape. If he felt powerless to describe adequately his ranch land to Brett, he lyrically captured the canyon in the opening of the story: "It was the green heart of the canyon, where the walls swerved back from the rigid plain and relieved their harshness of line by making a little sheltered nook and filling it to the brim with sweetness and roundness and softness. Here all things rested. Even the narrow stream ceased its turbulent downrush long enough to form a quiet pool...On one side, beginning at the very lip of the pool, was a tiny meadow, a cool, resilient surface of green that extended to the base of the frowning wall. Beyond the pool a gentle slope of earth ran up and up to meet the opposing wall. Fine grass covered the slope—grass that was spangled with flowers, with here and there patches of color, orange and purple and golden."

Later works would continue and expand on London's view of the unspoiled land as idyllic and redemptive, in particular his agrarian novels, *Burning Daylight* and *The Valley of the Moon*. However, he did not stop with merely an appreciation of the land and its beauty. He went further, holding the conviction that the land was to be improved and made fruitful in order to benefit humanity." He believed that, if the land were treated well and used wisely and with restraint, its bounty would bring about an end to the world's hunger and economic problems. Thus, once London began to devote himself fully to the ranch in the last five years of his life, he did so with



Eliza Shepard, Jack London's half-sister, managed his Sonoma ranch according to innovative scientific methods whenever possible. Among the projects was the Pig Palace, shown here, a stone roundhouse whose floor was constantly rinsed for optimum hog hygiene. Although this experiment ultimately failed, London reaped success raising other livestock and new varieties of crops. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*



a commitment to restoring the worn-out land and making it rich enough to support the people who would return to it. He often articulated this vision to family and friends, including George Brett, to whom he wrote, "It is dreadfully hard for me to get my friends to understand just what the ranch means to me...From a utilitarian standpoint I hope to do two things with the ranch: (1) To leave the land better for my having been; (2) and to enable thirty or forty families to live happily on ground that was so impoverished that an average of three farmers went bankrupt on each of the five ranches I have run together."<sup>10</sup>

Jack pursued his goal with the same vigor and single-minded purpose with which he attacked every endeavor in his life. Over several years, he bought seven ranches totaling about fourteen hundred acres, and he undertook to make his ranch into one of the premier enterprises in California. He acquired livestock, including fine horses, cows, goats, and a herd of prize pigs for which he built a giant "pig palace," naively designed for optimum hygiene and efficiency. He planted trees, crops, and grape vines according to scientific principles and his own good conservation sense. Even for someone of London's boundless energy, however, the ranch was too much to handle on top of his full regimen of writing—and the writing was necessary, not only to nurture Jack's spirit, but also in order to earn the money to sustain the not-yet-profitable ranch and to support the var-

ious family members who lived on the land. Therefore, Jack needed a manager, and he turned to his devoted stepsister Eliza London Shepard, appointing her ranch superintendent in 1911.

From his boyhood years, Jack had felt a deep affection for Eliza, and she had reciprocated in material ways, as well as with her loyalty. When Jack struggled as a young man to support himself by writing, Eliza stepped in with money to pay his bills, and she staked him to his Klondike venture. Jack never forgot her generosity and seized every opportunity to repay her, including building a cottage on the ranch for her and her son.

With Eliza at his right hand, Jack knew he had a reliable and loyal superintendent he could trust to carry out his plans and look out for his interests. This was especially important when he was away on his frequent trips and he left Eliza in charge of all ranch operations. The extensive correspondence between them attests both to Jack's exacting care in driving his ranch toward the excellence he demanded and to Eliza's practical and common sense attention to every detail. The letters brim with affection, humor, occasional irritation and, most of all, a tremendous amount of information about the business of operating and improving the ranch according to Jack's vision for the future.

Over the years, as Jack implemented more of the scientific principles of farming he learned from reading and studying, and despite the derision of some



the more traditional neighboring ranchers, he and Eliza began to see tangible results in the form of record crops and prize-winning livestock. By June 3, 1915, Eliza could write with much pride and satisfaction of the fine spring crops: "Will cut our hay during coming week; I wish that you were here to see it or it is the finest clean oat field that I have seen in the valley, or elsewhere. It is one solid field on the westerly side of road from town, right up to the LaMotte fence on [the] hill where Wiget said that we could ever raise anything (he never plowed it) and on the easterly side it is just as good. Am enclosing pictures of oats, vetch and colts; some of them are not good but will keep trying for better ones. These will show that oats are higher than the fences; the vetch pictures will show height of vetch compared with one of men; will get better snaps of colts for you."<sup>11</sup> Jack, replying on June 18, must have felt his dream for the ranch was beginning to become reality: "The photographs of the vetch and the colts were excitingly satisfying. We're getting things to grow out of that ground, even if it has taken some time. And it is the things that grow out of the ground that make the colt."<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, Jack did not live long enough to see whether the ranch could become all that he had idealistically hoped for, yet, with Eliza's able help, he did begin to achieve some of the successes with the land that his grand vision had foreseen.

The stories of London's agrarian dream, his writings, and his correspondence with his loyal and able stepsister Eliza can be found in the Jack London Collection housed in the Huntington Library. Several albums of photographs depict scenes from the ranch, showing animals, crops, ranch buildings and activities, and Jack and Charmian at play and work. There are manuscript and typewritten drafts of London's pastoral stories, such as "All Gold Canyon," as well as of his agrarian works *Burning Daylight*, *The Valley of the Moon*, and *The Acorn-Planter*. Jack's own subject file, still arranged as he left it, contains pamphlets, offprints, and clippings about farming and ranching methods, and a series of scrapbooks contains clippings about the Londons and their ranch from local and distant newspapers. Finally, extensive series of correspondence to and from the Londons document every aspect of ranch life and business. A large subset of this correspondence holds the largely untold story of Eliza London Shepard. About eighty letters between Jack and Eliza deal primarily with the operating of the ranch, and other letters from Eliza yield more information about her. The collection is an extraordinarily rich archive of thirty thousand items documenting every facet of London's life as author, journalist, war correspondent, sailor, rancher, and adventurer. This material

holds research promise both for making new discoveries and for reinterpreting what is already known about London's life and career.

By the end of the First World War, California's natural wonders thus had exerted a powerful influence on many different commentators and on various aspects of Anglo-California's emerging culture. Within another decade, the landscape and even the climate of the southern part of the state had come to dominate the newest American entertainment form, the motion picture. As part of a relocation from the East driven by a variety of reasons, the establishment of assorted production companies in the Los Angeles area allowed film makers to capitalize upon that locale's extended periods of pleasant weather, diverse landscape, and remarkable natural lighting. It also afforded the movie Western, one of the fledgling industry's most successful genres, a splendid array of "authentic" backdrops with which to entice audiences.<sup>13</sup>

Following the Edison Company's 1903 production, *The Great Train Robbery*, the most significant of the early Westerns, the film industry found continuing commercial success through frequent adaptations of episodes from a very extensive body of popular history and received wisdom. As one historian of the frontier has observed,

the Western may be more dependent on pre-cinematic forms and conventions than any of its rivals. The West was already a mythologized space when the first moviemakers found it, and early Westerns built directly on the formulas, images and allegorizing traditions of the Wild West show and cheap literature. No other genre had pre-cinematic roots of comparable depth and density.<sup>14</sup>

Drawing upon that vast fund of stories and images, film makers fell back on more and more western tales. By the 1920s, the Western represented between fifteen and thirty percent of the annual production of the industry.<sup>15</sup>

Driven to new levels of production by the imperative of increasing audiences, the movie industry had already developed a voracious appetite for the written word when the devastating impact of sound technology threw film makers into an upheaval. In the wake of sound's arrival, many new writers, especially from the ranks of playwrights and novelists from eastern cities, were brought west by the studios. Other writers, however, both transplanted and home-grown in California, also found the lures of prestige and financial reward offered by this new business too great to resist. As a community of scriptwriters and scenarists grew up around the studios, that community took on a life of its own and



embraced a wide range of individuals whose careers became deeply entangled with the industry. One such individual whose career coincided with the rise of the Western was a moderately successful novelist and short-story writer named Stuart N. Lake.

An ex-newspaperman and publicity agent who had relocated to San Diego from New York after service in World War I, Lake had begun promoting his stories to the studios in the 1920s. Struggling for recognition and acceptance in a highly competitive market, he made headway slowly, achieving his most durable success after the 1931 publication of *Wyatt Earp, Frontier Marshal*. Written with the assistance of the old lawman before his death in 1929 and subsequently with that of his widow, Josephine (Marcus) Earp, Lake's fast-moving account propelled a relentlessly virtuous and heroic Earp through a series of sanguinary encounters with assorted villains. Though the biography blended large dollops of fiction with fact, its subject stirred up considerable interest among various studios, including Fox Film Corporation (predecessor of Twentieth Century-Fox), which bought the movie rights soon after publication. Fox's subsequent production and 1934 release of *Frontier Marshal*, starring George O'Brien in the leading role, launched Lake's busy and often frustrating involvement with Hollywood Westerns over the next two decades.

Having spent a number of years shepherding his prose into print, Lake brought a fairly high and well-entrenched opinion of his own abilities to any project. Moreover, he continued to promote storylines of all sorts to his friends and acquaintances at the studios, including scenarios about Revolutionary War hero Francis Marion, champion prize-fighter John L. Sullivan, and abolitionist John Brown. However, in the wake of *Wyatt Earp*'s continuing success, Lake focused his time and energy on selling his Westerns to Hollywood. In doing so, Lake routinely highlighted the qualities of "zeal and enthusiasm" that he always brought to his writing, as well as to his consistently successful publishing record. Proclaiming on one occasion that "I can't reconcile myself to the belief that entertainment is not to be considered as an opportunity for real achievement," he assured studio representatives that he could supply material far superior to that regularly produced in Hollywood.<sup>16</sup> Beyond any other ability or talent, however, Lake emphasized his knowledge of the Old West and his skill in translating it into the written word.

Making his case to a reluctant Paramount Studios after a rejection of the Wyatt Earp biography, Lake described himself as "a writer who knows something about, and has a 'feel' for the West as it truly

was," qualities that they might find of use for "future possibilities." More succinctly, in characterizing the Earp biography to Dudley Nichols at Fox, he noted that "it carries authenticity," a trait that he would repeatedly claim for all his proposals.<sup>17</sup> On learning in 1945 of plans for a second remake of Fox's *Frontier Marshal* (a project that eventually evolved into John Ford's classic *My Darling Clementine*), Lake bombarded his contacts at Fox with letters urging his own involvement in the film, based upon his confident assertions that "I have more materials in my files than the amount published in the biography and I am one of two living persons who knows what actually happened in Tombstone." Again and again, as Lake made clear to every one of his correspondents in the industry, he described himself as the expert to be consulted about the Old West: "Suffice it to say I know the details."<sup>18</sup>

However many or few details of western history Lake actually possessed, he had sufficient skills as a writer to bring him some success in Hollywood following the 1931 publication of *Wyatt Earp*. During the two decades thereafter, he sold the rights to that book and to a subsequent book, *Wells Fargo* (produced in 1937 as a movie under the same title with Joel McCrea), the rights to a *Saturday Evening Post* story, "Vinegarron and the Jersey Lily" (which became the 1940 film *The Westerner* starring Walter Brennan and Gary Cooper), and the rights to a story that became the basis for the 1951 Jimmy Stewart film *Winchester '73*. *Wyatt Earp* had been produced three times (twice as *Frontier Marshal* and once as *My Darling Clementine*) and had contributed significant story elements to the 1953 picture, *Powder River*. Unfortunately, despite such achievements, Lake's more ambitious plans and schemes met with repeated disappointment and rejection, especially in response to his frequent offers to collaborate more closely as a writer or technical adviser during the production phase. Lake learned in time that he had fallen prey to problems that afflicted most writers connected in one way or another with the motion picture industry.

As Lake himself came to realize, the studio system's management of writers alienated many of them from the process. Writing in 1938 to an acquaintance at Columbia Pictures, he dourly commented on the fate of several of his proposals accepted by major studios:

In each case I was called "for conference" on a projected picture, and suggested possibilities in the customary, long-drawn discussions, and in each case went away to "await call." You know the answers—studio writers assigned to develop and my "calls" never came.<sup>19</sup>

ven the highly-paid and very successful writers the industry brought west, such as Stephen Vincent Benét, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Maxwell Anderson, routinely discovered a lack of the creative independence that had characterized their careers in other settings. The assembly-line nature of most movie-making, dictated by the industry's need to keep costs low and production high, angered and embittered many writers when they found their concepts and their prose subject to wholesale alteration by "collaborators" and "script doctors" assigned without their consent by the studios. "Writers have no executive authority and never have much choice in regard to collaborations," successful Hollywood writer Dudley Nichols observed ruefully to Lake about Fox Film Corporation's plans for the first version of *Frontier Marshal*.<sup>20</sup>

In the same letter to Lake, Nichols also commented sadly on the other debilitating challenge that confronted most writers: the relentless pressure to turn out products that conformed to the familiar standards of the Western genre that audiences had come to expect. In trying to warn Lake about Fox's plans for the film, Nichols wrote that "my only anxiety about Wyatt Earp is that it might not be screened in the spirit of the book...so many factors of a commercial nature enter into the making of pictures that it is only rarely that a fine substantial book finds its way to the screen intact."<sup>21</sup> Crediting the "money making basis" of the "whole Hollywood system" with exerting a dominant influence on the process, he remarked that "unfortunately the books I like most are seldom best sellers, and the pictures I like most are seldom box office hits." Subsequent letters to Lake from Nichols and from Julian Johnson at Fox informed him, in Johnson's words, that "it is not the big epic that your book was" and that, as Nichols put it, "from what I hear it is just a Western of the type that is turned out in the garret every week."<sup>22</sup>

Like many of his peers, Lake found such limitations on the employment of his creative energies frustrating on many fronts. Extraordinarily confident of his knowledge of the West and of his ability as a writer, he predicted exceptional results for any project he proposed. Eager for the work, he always had new scripts and plots to sell to any studio that would listen. Beyond the wounds he suffered to his pocketbook and his professional pride, however, Lake regretted his frequent failure to realize his personal vision of American history in the movies made from his writings.

Addressing Carl Laemmle of Universal Pictures in a 1931 letter, he made his case that his Earp biography was "corking fine picture material, the com-



Wyatt Earp, 1926. Stuart Lake initiated his correspondence with Earp a year after this image was taken. His popular biography of Earp was published in 1931, two years after the legendary gunfighter's death.  
*Courtesy Huntington Library.*

ing of Law and Order to the lawless West in the person of the greatest gunfighting peace officer that the frontier knew." Returning frequently to that theme, he advocated stories that would portray "the arrival of the law in a lawless land" or "the smashing human drama latent in the American cowboy...unfolded against the background of the cow business" and whose scope, if fully explored and exploited, would carry any film far beyond the status of "just another Western." Writing to an acquaintance at MGM in 1951, twenty years after the publication of *Wyatt Earp*, Lake summarized his view when he argued "to harp again on my favorite note: The American tradition in the making can have a stronger box office appeal than any other subject matter and its possibilities in the way of sheer entertainment are almost endless."<sup>23</sup> Lake's effort to sell that proposition carried him through a nearly thirty-year association with the movies and, eventually, with television as a consultant to and a scriptwriter for the series *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp* in the late 1950s. Now in the possession of the Huntington Library, the Stuart Lake Collection includes hundreds of letters to and from various studios, documenting his involvement with the entertainment industry.



Elsewhere in the extensive holdings of the Huntington, numerous resources running the gamut from stage and screen through radio and television support the study of that industry in twentieth-century California. A recent addition of correspondence and legal documents to the papers of Jack London in the Huntington Library, for example, discusses that author's tempestuous relationship in the 1910s with production companies attempting to film *The Sea Wolf*, while the papers of writers Zoe Akins and Sonya Levien include many interesting letters about their years of writing for the studios in the 1930s and 1940s. The hundreds of scripts (many written by John Meston) for the series *Gunsmoke* during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s follow the transition of that extraordinarily popular Western from radio to television. The files of programs, playbills, scrapbooks, and posters from the Pasadena Playhouse and the 600-plus scripts from the Mark Taper Forum (representing the Taper's productions since 1967) capture the development of the theater at two landmark southern California venues. Through these papers and related collections at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Warner Brothers, and the American Film Institute, researchers may glimpse some of the forces at work in establishing Los Angeles as a leading center for many forms of popular entertainment.

By the 1930s, therefore, as Stuart Lake's experience demonstrates, the movie studios had evolved into a successful industry that dominated American popular culture from its base in southern California. During the early decades of the twentieth century, which marked Hollywood's rise to prominence, however, other significant cultural institutions took on new life in the Golden State, especially in the burgeoning community of Los Angeles. The performing arts in particular struggled to reach a new level of professionalism and public acceptance.

At least since the eighteenth century, many a fledgling North American settlement had aspired to demonstrate that it had outgrown its adolescence by emphasizing the sophisticated and cosmopolitan cultural life it supported. By the late nineteenth century, such aspirations certainly affected the development of various cities along the Pacific Coast and continued to influence them well into the twentieth century. Opera houses, concert halls, and theaters appeared in many western communities, led by San Francisco in the wake of the Gold Rush and followed by other mining-boom towns.<sup>24</sup>

In the same pattern followed by like-minded individuals in other communities, prominent civic lead-

ers in Los Angeles tried to plant such institutions in their city's soil for various reasons. As Kevin Starr has noted, "in a city and region of people from elsewhere, with few highly developed civic institutions, music and music-related pageantry...provided an important bond among people struggling to reassert themselves in new surroundings."<sup>25</sup> At the same time, other Angelinos drew a sense of civic pride and distinction from the presence of temples of the performing arts. Fortunately, to nurture the seedlings that would bear such fruit, Los Angeles enjoyed the services of a remarkable cultivator of the arts, Lynden Ellesworth Behymer.

Of Dutch ancestry and midwestern upbringing, Behymer arrived in southern California during the fabled "boom of the eighties." Once established there, he found employment for his exceptional promotional skills and his unlimited appreciation for music and the arts. With an eye to the potential audience reflected in the continuing growth of Los Angeles's population, he increasingly promoted musical and theatrical events through the 1890s. By 1900, when he had become the manager of both the Los Angeles Symphony and the Women's Symphony, he was widely recognized as southern California's premier impresario. Energetic, enthusiastic, and inventive as a promoter, Behymer developed a reputation as an unrelenting advocate of fine music, celebrated performers, and his own considerable abilities. In one dynamic personality, Behymer incorporated a ceaseless pursuit of the best artists in every field of musical performance with an equally unwavering commitment to his own financial success.<sup>26</sup>

To thus satisfy his own needs and the desires of his customers, he invested much time and effort in trying to gauge the evolving tastes of his audiences. Despite his most careful evaluation of the market, however, he could never predict with absolute certainty the reactions of the crowd, as demonstrated well by the erratic reception given to Behymer's forays into the world of grand opera. An artistic form redolent of aristocratic European settings and a sophisticated appreciation of vocal and instrumental performance, opera had made sporadic appearances on the Pacific Coast since the early years of gold-rush San Francisco. By 1900, however, it had found precious few permanent footholds in the region when Behymer brought the Maurice Grau Metropolitan Opera to Los Angeles for three performances.

Subsequent appearances by it and by other touring companies during the next two decades met with modest financial success one season and financial

astrophe in the very next year. Nonetheless, Behymer continued to cater to a core of opera devotees before and after World War I, drawing from, among other sources, the opera associations based in Chicago and San Francisco. Even in the wake of the Great Depression of the 1930s, Behymer inaugurated yet another operatic venture, a short series of performances in Los Angeles by the San Francisco Opera in 1937. Buoyed by its success, Behymer proposed another season for the autumn of 1938.

In setting out once again to sell opera to the artistically inclined residents of southern California, Behymer wrote glowingly of a season "which brings to our community for the first time, such a classic as *Elektra*"; for the second time, *'Pelleas & Melisande*'; and *'Coq d'Or*' for the first time in Rimsky-Korakoff's original opera concept" all filled with "the greatest artists for their respective roles" drawn from the great opera houses of Europe and South America. Such artists would be presented locally by Behymer's organization under the auspices of the San Francisco Opera, "whose standards are not surpassed, if equalled, by those of any other opera company in the world," chosen "with the utmost care by Director Gaetano Merola." All these elements, when taken together, according to Behymer, would contribute to a season that would solidify Los Angeles's position as "The Musical Mecca of the West."<sup>27</sup>

Even as he offered such lyrical praise of the forthcoming program's musical quality, however, Behymer also put into motion an aggressive and wide-ranging subscription campaign. Throughout the summer of 1938, Behymer proved a very "Busy Bee" indeed, sending off hundreds of letters to season-ticket holders, underwriters, and guarantors from the 1937 season, trying to secure their patronage for the upcoming series. Such letters circulated among a host of individuals prominent in the arts, entertainment, education, and commerce, using many different appeals to the various constituencies. Addressing one motion picture studio executive, for example, he wrote that "members of the Motion Picture Colony have always been noted as patrons of the musical arts, and especially as devotees of Grand Opera." In a different letter, he observed that "the season of 1937 was a great success, artistically, socially, and commercially for the local business men." Letterheads bore long lists of well-known southern Californians, from educators Rufus Von Kleinsmid and Robert G. Sproul and movie moguls Jack Warner and Louis B. Mayer, to civic leaders John Anson Ford, Ezra Scattergood, and Joseph Scott.<sup>28</sup> Behymer's special call for underwriters and guarantors to insure the season against financial loss stated that

our great objective is to give an annual season of excellent opera to the citizens and the visitors in the Southwest, but we cannot do it alone. We must ask the cooperation of those citizens in Los Angeles who are interested in the cultural activities of life to join in guaranteeing such a season.<sup>29</sup>

Behymer's salesmanship began, of course, with the most obvious constituency, those individuals who had purchased season tickets in 1937, trying to ensure their patronage for the 1938 performances. Other letters solicited endorsements of the season by politicians such as Mayor Fletcher Bowron (just installed after the recall election that had turned out Frank Shaw) or announced with great triumph the decision of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to contribute \$2,500 toward the season's advertising costs, "in token of the national advertising given the County not only as 'The Musical Mecca of the West' but as a good place to make one's home."<sup>30</sup>

Reaching out beyond the mailroom, Behymer did not neglect the personal touch to tout the season as well. Various speakers, such as Carleton Smith, identified as *Esquire's* music critic, were dispatched to heighten public anticipation. Behymer himself went campaigning on the musical hustings, compiling an impressive list of speaking engagements during September and October that included the Japan-American Society, the American Women's Round Table, the Women's University Club, the Hollywood Opera Reading Club, the Schubert Club, the Friday Morning Club, and the Ebell Club.<sup>31</sup>

Behymer's exhaustive labors certainly bore some notable fruit as the opening of the series in November drew nearer. By October 15, Behymer's office was generating long lists of ticket holders, which included such names as Walt Disney, Edna May Oliver, Darryl Zanuck, Bing Crosby, Sigmund Romberg, Basil Rathbone, Ginger Rogers, Jeanette McDonald, and Olivia de Havilland.<sup>32</sup> Although he would not have used the specific term, Behymer definitely possessed great faith in the efficacy of "star power" to help boost the fortunes of the series.

Immediately following the series's conclusion, Behymer at first vigorously proclaimed its glorious accomplishments. Commenting proudly that the "consensus of opinion, expressed privately as well as in the press, marks this Opera Week as a milestone of musical progress," he added with evident satisfaction that "Los Angeles has at last taken her place as a world music center." Although admitting that he lacked the auditor's report on the season's financial outcome, he added that "[the] efforts and money invested in last week's opera series are well justified by the national and international publicity for Los



Angeles County, accruing from these superb performances."<sup>33</sup>

As the final figures for the 1938 opera week were tallied, unhappily, Behymer found the results rather less satisfactory than he had first hoped. Perhaps the first storm warnings had arisen in an October 28 letter to Behymer from Victor H. Rossetti, president of the Farmers and Merchants Bank and chairman of the San Francisco Opera Company's Los Angeles Committee. In it, Rossetti alerted Behymer that "I find it difficult to interest people in underwriting, particularly at this time, when they are confronted on all sides for political contributions, and now for Community Chest." Rossetti continued ominously that "the resistance is quite concrete, and I am sure that you quite appreciate it." Within a few weeks, as the auditor's report came to hand, Behymer found that the Los Angeles program had lost over \$23,000 in a season when the San Francisco Opera Company had run a loss of nearly \$89,000.<sup>34</sup>

After such a dousing in red ink, Behymer had to devote much time over the next five months to explaining the losses and justifying the season's costs to the irate guarantors and underwriters, who suddenly had to honor their pledges to make good the financial shortfalls. In letter after letter, Behymer addressed the dollars and cents question by citing the \$34,000 spent by the San Francisco Opera on a whole raft of goods and services, including "Shrine [Auditorium] rentals, newspaper advertising, stage hands and stage equipment...loading and unloading, lighting effects...local stage bands...and many more items..." all of which rebounded to the financial benefit of the local merchants. Behymer also regaled inquirers with a long list of reasons for the lackluster gate receipts, citing, among other distractions, the culmination of an exciting political campaign, the Armistice Day holiday, two week-end football games, and the Embassy Ball.<sup>35</sup>

Despite such efforts at expatiation, though, Behymer never retreated from his main argument that the intangible benefits of such artistic excellence far outweighed any deficiencies that might have affected the bottom line. Repeatedly Behymer asserted that "I think in discussing the opera season with Los Angeles citizens you will find nothing but respect and admiration for the artistic merits of the season." Describing the opera week without reservation as "a fine undertaking," he added that "such an Opera Company raises the prestige of our community, not only nationally but internationally." Tackling the question of the deficit head-on, he argued that "One cannot live by bread alone, as we all know; and one cannot judge and weigh results by money alone." Implicitly dismissing criticism of

"Los Angeles County — Musical Mecca  
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**SECOND LOS ANGELES SEASON**

*San Francisco*

**OPERA  
COMPANY**

GAETANO MEROLA, *General Director*  
PETER CONLEY, *Business Manager*

Southern California Representatives:  
L. E. BEHYMER      ELMER WILSON  
RENA MacDONALD ASKIN, *Associate*

**SHRINE AUDITORIUM**  
November 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 1938

ARMANDO AGNINI, *Stage and Technical Director*  
HERBERT GRAF, *Guest Stage Director*  
WILLIAM TYROLER, *Chorus Master*  
WILLIAM CHRISTENSEN, *Ballet Master*  
*Casts, Dates and Repertoire Subject to Change*

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Saturday Night, November 5, at 8:00

**ANDREA CHENIER**

Opera in four acts — Music by Umberto Giordano  
Text (in Italian) by Luigi Illica

Andrea Chenier, a poet of the French Revolution

Madeleine, daughter of the Countess de Coigny	BENIAMINO GIGLI
Countess de Coigny	ELISABETH RETHBERG
Bersi, Madeleine's maid	*DORIS DOE
Gerard, footman at the chateau, later a revolutionist	LINA KROPH
Floville, a novelist pensioner of the king	RICHARD BONELLI
The Abbe	*JOHN HOWELL
A Spy for the Revolutionists	LUDOVICO OLIVIERO
Roucher, Chenier's friend	LUDOVICO OLIVIERO
A Blind Woman	GEORGE CEHANOVSKY
Mathieu, a revolutionist	DORIS DOE
Fouquier-Tinville, public prosecutor	LOUIS D'ANGELO
Dumas, president of the revolutionary tribunal	ARNOLD GABOR
Schmidt, jailer at St Lazare	NORMAN CORDON
	ARNOLD GABOR

\*Los Angeles Debut.  
Conductor: GAETANO MEROLA

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Monday Night, November 7, at 7:45

L.E. Behymer's lifelong commitment to establishing classical music and opera in Los Angeles included two seasons that featured the San Francisco Opera Company. The 1938 season of six works, announced in this brochure from the Huntington's extensive Behymer collection, included "La Boheme," performed in Italian, and Wagner's "Die Meistersinger," in German. Courtesy Huntington Library.

the season's monetary losses, he claimed that "opera has never been given anywhere in the world for profit because there seldom is any. One may have a profit in a certain season, but by and large, opera is given for the 'kick' that music-lovers get out of it."<sup>36</sup> Acknowledging other criticisms of the program choices, Behymer defended the selection of the mod-

in works, whose gate receipts must have been meager. Choosing to interpret such lukewarm response as positively as possible, he flatly stated that "we did what every progressive organization worth its salt does, include operas of world importance, and high artistic merit, seldom or never given here." To Behymer, the only justification required for the opera series was that "The reaction from cultured adults and the students has been one of gratitude and unbounded enthusiasm." Judged by such criteria, the success of the 1938 opera series was evident if only the contributors could be convinced to take the larger, longer view."<sup>17</sup>

Throughout the winter, spring, and summer, Behymer beat this drum continually to answer pointed, if not hostile, questions from guarantors and contributors at many levels. In a March 1939 letter to the County Board of Supervisors explaining the obstacles confronted by the 1938 season, Behymer summed up his case on behalf of opera in Los Angeles:

During my half century as an impresario in this community, I can truthfully say I have never presented an operatic series of which I was prouder for its high artistic merit, great stars and all-round satisfaction given to subscribers....The encomiums of the local press, the comment of the national and international press which gave flattering attention to our city during the opera season, and the plaudits of those who attended, show conclusively that this engagement proved to be a great asset to Los Angeles.<sup>18</sup>

The Huntington's Behymer Collection, replete with such incidents, testifies to Lynden Behymer's critical role over five decades in directing much of the musical life of southern California and the Southwest at large through the dizzying pace of his activities. Shelves packed with playbills, programs, scrapbooks, and file boxes filled with letters, financial statements, and contracts document much of his fascinating career. To supplement the splendid resources available in the Behymer papers, other Huntington collections illuminate other aspects of musical performance in southern California through the 1930s and 1940s. The correspondence files of T. Percival Gerson, a founder of the Hollywood Bowl, include his involvement in various community and musical projects. On a much larger scale, the Ojai Festivals Collection portrays the inception and development of a major cultural series under its founding director, John L. J. Bauer, from 1946 until 1953.

The struggles of Lynden Behymer to bring opera to Los Angeles exemplify some of the difficulties encountered in establishing the arts in California during the first few decades of this cen-

tury. Despite the setbacks he and other impresarios experienced, opera increasingly became part of the arts scene in Los Angeles. Similarly, ballet began to find a toe-hold in the cultural lives of Angelenos. By the 1920s, thirties, and forties, the dance studios of Bronislava Nijinska, Ruth St. Denis, and others offered scores of budding ballerinas the chance to learn classic dance. However, the world of ballet and "serious" dance was limited almost entirely to those with white skin. For African Americans and other minorities, opportunity was scarce or nonexistent. As ballet became more firmly established, people of color fought to shed the stereotyping by which society bound them rigidly to tap or jitterbug dancing. The struggles of one band of black dancers for opportunity, mirroring the changes in American society, are portrayed in the story of Joseph Rickard and the First Negro Classic Ballet.

In 1946 a young Los Angeles man named Joseph Rickard watched in anger as an African American mother and her daughter were turned away from a dance studio where they had sought ballet lessons for the little girl. The ballet instructor told them that blacks could not study classical dance and directed them to a tap-dance studio. The outraged Rickard, a Caucasian and himself a ballet dancer, vowed to do something about this injustice. Believing passionately that all who shared his love for dance should be able to enjoy it fully, he set about starting his own dance studio specifically for African American students. The resulting troupe of dancers, the First Negro Classic Ballet, took its place for just over a decade in the histories of the arts in Los Angeles and of dance in America—a place that is now being rediscovered through the papers of this long-forgotten man and his corps of dancers.

In the years after World War II and into the 1950s, American blacks enjoyed modestly expanded opportunities, resulting first from their extensive contributions in the armed services and the war effort in general, and later from desegregation initiatives during President Truman's administration. African Americans began to make tentative steps into many areas of mainstream American life, including dance. By 1951, Janet Collins became the first black premier dancer in the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, and in 1954 the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo accepted its first black ballerina, Raven Wilkinson.<sup>19</sup> But as she danced *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, and other classics, Wilkinson soon discovered the limits of the public's acceptance of blacks. With her light skin, she was assumed by audiences to be white when she performed and traveled with the company. However, after the 1954 school desegregation decision, word of her race became public and the Ballet Russe's subsequent tour through the Amer-



ican South was marked by theater cancellations, boycotts, and bomb threats.

Prior to the limited integration in the 1950s, African American dancers had been barred altogether from major ballet studios. In the 1920s, when ballet was a young dance form in the United States, aspiring dancers of color had no choice but to study either in segregated settings or as private students of prominent white teachers willing to take them. By the 1930s, black dancers began to emerge from their private and segregated schooling, and in 1937 a black ballet company, the American Negro Ballet, debuted in New York.<sup>40</sup> Founded by a German émigré, Baron Eugene von Grona, the group premiered on November 21 at Harlem's Lafayette Theatre. Although its debut was a critical and popular success, the American Negro Ballet survived barely a year before its 1938 demise because of financial troubles combined with the difficulty of finding suitable theaters (other than vaudeville houses) that would accept the all-black group.

Barely a decade later, in Los Angeles, Joseph Rickard founded his First Negro Classic Ballet. Rickard (1918-1994), a native of Michigan, had made his way to Los Angeles in the 1930s to fulfill his long-held desire to study ballet. Accepted as a student of Bronislava Nijinska, he became a professional with the Ballet Russe in 1943. After he witnessed the dance studio's rejection of the black child, Rickard applied his creative energies to setting up a ballet school and gathering students from the African American community. He found a deserted ballroom at Jefferson Boulevard and Normandie Avenue for his studio, and to finance the school he worked two jobs, in the mailroom at Paramount Studios and driving an ice cream truck. He also lived at the studio in order to save money. To attract students, Rickard placed ads in an African American newspaper, the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, and worked the streets handing out leaflets and promoting his studio through personal contact. He recruited Theodore Crum—who would become one of his most gifted dancers—when he happened upon the young man buying a recording of "Swan Lake."

Along with Ted Crum, many of the dancers Rickard taught, since they had been barred from the opportunity open to Caucasian students, came to ballet late in life, some as many as ten years beyond the optimum starting age. In addition to those he recruited directly, some of Rickard's adult students came to the studio initially merely to watch their children's lessons and were then persuaded to join in. Indeed, Bernice Harrison, the mother whose little girl had been denied lessons, began studying along with her daughter and became the Classic Ballet's

prima ballerina. Beginning their training so late in life, the dancers could not achieve the technical ease and proficiency of younger students, but Rickard was particularly gifted in teaching older students and, with his genius for choreographing dance sequences that relied on narrative and acting abilities rather than technique, he was able to emphasize the strengths of his performers.

Joseph Rickard also possessed a genius for attracting other gifted and dedicated individuals to his group. His girlfriend, Nancy Cappola, who worked in the garment district, designed and made the costumes. Claudius Wilson, an African American pianist and composer, played piano for rehearsals and performances and, one day, brought in his musical setting for "Harlot's House," an Oscar Wilde poem. Rickard created the choreography, and the resulting piece, "Streetlight," became one of the Ballet's most popular and frequently performed dances. Thereafter, Wilson and Rickard teamed to create original ballets, including their African American version of "Cinderella." Rickard also persuaded Robert Usher, an art director at Paramount Studios, to design sets for the company. Usher, whose film work included sets for the Mae West movie, *She Done Him Wrong*, and the Hope-Crosby "Road" pictures, created stunning set drawings for "Cinderella" and other dances.

The Classic Ballet's dancers brought to the group the same level of dedication and commitment as Rickard's volunteer staff. Unlike their counterparts in white ballet companies, the black dancers could not devote themselves full-time to their dance studios. Rather, they worked as janitors, elevator operators, and housewives, and came to their lessons after a hard day on the job, many traveling long miles across town on a streetcar or bus before an evening of strenuous dancing. In addition, the dancers also helped with the making of costumes and the fabrication of sets for the grassroots company.

With the ballet studio launched and the dancers rapidly displaying mastery of their art, Rickard began to plan the group's first recital. Held on October 19, 1947, at the Danish Auditorium on West 24th Street, the event was sponsored by the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, which publicized it (using the group's first name, "Ballet Americana") as "one of the outstanding performances of the season."<sup>41</sup> In its review of the recital, the *Sentinel* declared, "Sunday night marked the beginning of a new era in American Culture. The successful presentation of the Ballet Americana—the first time in history, so far as is known, that such a performance has been presented—opened an entire new field of expression to Negroes."<sup>42</sup>

There followed performances at the Sawtelle Vet-

rans' Hospital, Hollywood High School, and other Los Angeles venues. By 1949, the company, now known as the First Negro Classic Ballet, was establishing its place in the arts scene in southern California. Its first professional performance, on November 19 in Santa Barbara's Lobero Theatre, impressed both the audience and the dance reviewer, who praised the company for its "artistry," "showmanship," and "promise."<sup>41</sup>

The Classic Ballet, now a professional troupe represented in turn by booking agents Irwin Parnes and Mary Bran, performed in such Los Angeles theaters as the Assistance League Playhouse and the Philharmonic Auditorium, and toured California, earning the favor of its predominantly white audiences and garnering overwhelmingly enthusiastic reviews. While the majority of critics produced reviews bearing few or no traces of prejudice or condescension, others, clinging to racial stereotypes even as they praised the group's artistry, viewed black ballet dancers as exotic novelties and evinced surprise that people of color could dance any style other than tap, boogie-woogie, the jitterbug, and other dances long associated with the black race. One San Francisco journalist, for example, began his review by stating, "Negro dancers are famous for the exciting cleverness and energy of their taps and boogie-woogie" before going on to praise the performers, and another wrote, "Color, rhythm and novelty were the outstanding elements in the Hollywood Negro Ballet [the name briefly used in 1952 by the First Negro Classic Ballet]...Rhythm is so inherent in the Negro race that it was not surprising to find even the less skilled members of the sextet right on the beat—with hands as well as feet."<sup>42</sup> Similarly, a London journalist anticipated the Ballet's arrival on international tour with an article, "Cinders in Sepia," which referred to "Negro dancing as boogie-woogie, blues and frenzied throw backs to jungle rhythms" and asked, "Could there be a Negro Nijinsky? We may know, soon, when an all-coloured classic ballet crosses the Atlantic."<sup>43</sup>

Other insults, both deliberate and inadvertent, born of the prejudice of the time, had to be overcome by the dancers. A frequent difficulty for the black troupe when touring was the scarcity of hotels that would admit them. Tellingly, the same issue of the *Santa Barbara News-Press* that carried the publicity announcement about the Classic Ballet's first professional performance also ran an article about the citizens who had offered to open their homes to the members of the company.<sup>44</sup> In another revealing incident, the touring black dancers discovered on arriving in England that, despite their advance dispatch of the ballerinas' toe-shoe measurements to

London manufacturers, no shoes were ready for them—British shoemakers simply could not believe that blacks could dance *en pointe*.

Many reviewers, along with most audiences, were free of racial prejudice and responded with genuine pleasure and appreciation to the Ballet's exciting dance sequences that were characterized by one critic as "an escape from stereotyped use of form" with "alive and never flagging performances," and by another as "a refreshing and individual treatment of the classical dance...balanced with some of the more realistic styles."<sup>45</sup> The company, led by Graham Johnson, Bernice Harrison, James Truitte, Theodore Crum, Donald Stinson, and Yvonne Miller, dazzled audiences with programs that usually included three components: modern conceptions of classics by such composers as Bach, Chopin, and Mendelssohn; contemporary Rickard-Wilson creations like "Cinderella" and "Streetlight"; and African American stories such as "Raisin' Cane" (music by Claudius Wilson, choreography by Graham Johnson), a tale of sugar-cane croppers whose sequences included "Juba," "Speakeasy," and "Pas de jitters."

In 1956, Rickard was approached by Edward Flemmyng, who had just formed the New York Negro Ballet, with a proposal to merge the companies. The idea looked attractive, for Rickard was short of money but had a large, experienced troupe of dancers, while Flemmyng lacked dancers but had the backing of a wealthy patron. The two began a collaboration, and, although Joseph Rickard remained in Los Angeles, many of the Los Angeles dancers moved to New York, where they gave several performances before embarking on a tour of the British Isles from August to November 1957. While on tour, the dancers received word that their patron had passed away, thus bringing to an end not only the tour, but also the company itself.

During its ten-year life, the First Negro Classic Ballet played a crucial part in advancing the place of African Americans in American ballet. Although Joseph Rickard's troupe was not the first black ballet corps, it built on the accomplishments of its predecessor, Baron von Grona's American Negro Ballet. Rickard's troupe advanced the cause further, for, to a greater extent than von Grona, he trained his dancers in the formal, classical techniques and customs, and, against great odds, he kept the group in existence for a decade. Both ballet companies set the stage for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, founded in 1968 by Arthur Mitchell. The high level of achievement in all three groups proved the ability and artistry of black dancers and enabled them increasingly to find acceptance in white companies.





Instructor, dancer, and founder of the First Negro Classic Ballet, Joseph Rickard (1918-1994), above, rehearses with Bernice Harrison, 1952.  
*Courtesy Huntington Library.*

The long-forgotten story of Joseph Rickard's contribution to the advancement of black ballet and to the arts in Los Angeles is found in the papers he donated to the Huntington Library shortly before his death in August 1994. The photographs, programs, publicity flyers, set designs, music scores, tape recordings, and clippings afford a rich resource that will further illuminate the history of a talented band of dancers and of the dedicated man in whose hands their dreams took wing and soared.

Such a brief compendium of anecdotes, of course, can only hint at the incredible scope and diversity of recreation, the arts, and entertainment in the Golden State. Many other archival collections, both at the Huntington Library and elsewhere in California, touch on the subjects previously mentioned and on others not yet identified. Just among the collections of the Huntington, interested researchers would discover equally intriguing

materials on such topics as architecture, sports, and art collectors. The Myron Hunt Collection, for example, offers some insights into the early career of this important southern California architect, who heavily influenced early twentieth-century design in the region. Business papers of the Los Angeles Racing Association appear in the Anita Baldwin Collection, while the Henry Harbison Sinclair papers mix turn-of-the-century details about the Tournament of Roses Association and the California-to-Honolulu Yacht Races with his involvement in California electrical utilities. Fine printing and the graphic arts receive attention in the papers of San Francisco printer Edward DeWitt Taylor, while the papers of entrepreneurs Adolph Sutro and Henry E. Huntington illustrate the activities of two celebrated bibliophiles and the libraries that arose from their collecting. The papers of art collector Grace Nicholson, who built and disposed of two separate caches of American Indian and then Oriental art, include the history of

Members of the First Negro Classic Ballet Company, Yvonne Miller and Theodore Crum, dance in a 1949 performance of "Pagliacci," choreographed by Joseph Rickard. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*



the building that became first the Pasadena Art Institute and later the Pacific Asia Museum. Other papers documenting the activities of collector and philanthropist Phoebe Apperson Hearst appear in the manuscript collection of her close friends Orrin and Janet Peck of San Francisco.

The collections described above represent only a miniscule portion of the archival resources addressing recreation, entertainment, and the arts that reside in the holdings of the Huntington Library and its sister institutions, small and large, across California. Through those holdings, interested researchers may gain greater understanding of California's literary, artistic, and cultural heritage. It is through this archival record that we can follow the Golden State's evolution into a pacesetter for trends throughout popular culture, here and abroad.

CHS

*See notes beginning on page 108.*

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## ARCHIVAL RESOURCES PERTAINING TO ETHNIC AND GENDER ISSUES

by Gloria Ricci Lothrop

In an attempt to recapture the lost ancestry of an immigrant nation, there has been in recent years an increasing interest in genealogical research. The diverse resources available in such a quest are nowhere more necessary than in California, a state whose majority will soon consist of an aggregation of minority populations. During this same period, women, traditionally the unrepresented partners in the social contract, have achieved new status and recognition in the business sector, the legislatures, and the classrooms, resulting in invigorated self-esteem, pride in their accomplishments, and a desire to rediscover their past.

The search by both groups into their forgotten history shares some common characteristics. Because most women and many immigrants remained at the periphery of power, the reconstruction of their lost history poses significant challenges. They were not often found within the ranks of corporate executives, public policy leaders, or military strategists whose decisions and actions were reflected in formal transactions and treaties and reported in media. Furthermore, as marginalized members of the politico-economic system they often appear not as individuals, but rather as demographic statistics or production units. As a result of their exclusion from the power structure, ethnic immigrants and women were often denied their fair recognition. Accomplishments that did not fit the socially imposed stereotype were often dismissed, minimized, or sometimes subsumed under broader collections. As a result, letters and photographs were not kept, and ethnic newspapers and fraternal organization records were often destroyed.

Most researchers studying the stories of women and ethnic minorities must comb through generic holdings of archival repositories using more general collections of documents to draw inferences about the experiences of women and immigrants.<sup>1</sup> For example, ships' passenger manifests and crew lists reveal the pattern of entry for various ethnic groups. Census records are a valuable tool in establishing

numbers, origin, activity, family size, and sometimes the amount of land owned. Business and telephone directories reveal residential patterns and employment profiles. Records of specialized public agencies provide unexpected information. The Southwest Regional Office of the U.S. Forest Service in San Francisco, for example, provides information on ethnic groups who joined the regional logging industry from the late nineteenth century to the present. State historic sites and buildings on the national register may also yield useful information. The Russian outpost at Fort Ross provides tangible evidence of the early Russian presence in America, and Sun House in Ukiah contains the papers and personal effects of artist Grace Carpenter Hudson, who was best known for her depictions of Native Americans. The *Great Registers* (of voters), found in diverse repositories throughout California, reveal country of origin, employment, place of naturalization, and physical appearance. Also fruitful are government archives in countries of emigration.<sup>2</sup>

Information on women, who often were not employed outside the home and were not enfranchised in California until 1911, may be found in records of the Public Health Service, church and cemetery records, college and university records, and the minutes of female auxiliaries of ethnic benevolent societies. While women's handcrafts, cookbooks, and household utensils are fruitful sources in reconstructing the private lives of average women, so too are their diaries and photographs, which can be found in many archives.<sup>3</sup>

Records of many overlooked actors in the historical pageant remain to be found, as illustrated in my personal experiences. A phone call prompted by an article I had co-authored on the Los Angeles Friday Morning Club led to a treasure trove of materials, supposedly trash, stored in a shed within the shadows of the University of Southern California. Colleagues and I were thus able to rescue the papers of Caroline Severance, an abolitionist crusader who had shared the podium with William Lloyd Garrison.



Italian American parishioners preserve traditional Old-World music and dance at St. Mary's Catholic Parish, Sacramento, ca. 1946. Courtesy City of Sacramento Museum and History Division.

Severance also was a participant in the organization of the Republican Party, a founder of the New England Women's Club, the Friday Morning Club, and the International Federation of Women's Clubs, a pioneer in the kindergarten movement, and a recognized leader among suffragists and social reformers. The Severance collection, now housed in the Huntington Library, has been used by numerous scholars studying the history of the women's club movement, the suffrage crusade, and the California kindergarten movement. Examination of these papers has also contributed to understanding the contributions of Socialist political supporters to the suffrage cause and the importance of clubwomen in the initial phase of the municipal reform movement.

It is as frustrating to witness the disappearance of an historic record as it is gratifying to recapture it. Since I had shared the experiences of Italian enemy aliens in the United States at the onset of World War II, including curfews, travel restrictions, relocation, and internment, when I became a professional historian, I noted with dismay that these experiences were not represented in conventional studies. Archival records, however, gave substance to what I had begun to suspect had been a childhood fantasy. For example, the archives of the Italian newspaper *L'Italia Americana*, housed in the basement of a Los Angeles retirement home, through headlines and editorials recaptured the apprehension and

drama that infused the early months of World War II. Articles outlining Justice Department orders and regulations were corroborated in newspapers in the *Los Angeles Times* archives and in the microfilmed records of the Commission on Wartime Relocation in the UCLA Special Collections Library. There I found a telegram from the FBI agent who accompanied my stepfather, Italian newspaper publisher Giovanni Falasca, to the internment camp at Missoula, Montana. I was especially gratified to discover a memo issued in October 1943 by Attorney General Francis Biddle, repudiating the methods used to apprehend and hold these political internees. As a result of archival materials, an overlooked story has been reconstructed to my satisfaction and for the instruction of readers of my three ensuing articles. Numerous other stories, some of them unsuspected, but all of them essential to reconstructing American women's and ethnic history, await the researcher in archives throughout the state.

**K**ey to the study of women and minorities in California are the two California branches of the National Archives. Both the Pacific Southwest Region in Laguna Niguel, and the Pacific Sierra Region in San Bruno include among their holdings fifty thousand reels of microfilm publications of records in the National Archives. These include records of the Public Health Service, which reported



on the condition of ships and passengers that arrived from Asian and Central and South American ports. Dispatches from U.S. ministers to China document the international implications of the Asian exclusion policies initiated by the federal government in the late nineteenth century. Notes from foreign legations in the United States to the Department of State, 1861–1906, reflect the Italian government's distress over the treatment of immigrants in California's labor camps in the early twentieth century. The Civil War/Internal Revenue Assessment lists for 1862–1866 include descriptions of personal belongings like carriages and pianos.

Both National Archives regional centers also hold microfilm of abstracts and compendia of the Federal Population Censuses for all states from 1790 to 1920. California first appeared in the Census of 1850, which includes information on health, education, property ownership, and occupation. The 1880 census contains information on the relationship of all residents to the head of household, marital status, number of months unemployed, literacy, school attendance, if any, the year, place of birth, and place of birth of father and mother. Despite errors arising from language barriers and faulty age reporting and such vagaries as the shifting classification of Mexicans as a separate race (1930) to more complicated classifications in 1970 through 1990, and the addition in 1870 and 1880 of codes for Chinese and Indians added to those for whites, blacks, and mulattoes, these records yield bountiful information on women and ethnic minorities. Local federal depositories also document land ownership of minorities and women in California.

The Pacific Southwest Region also has the Los Angeles District Court naturalization records, indexed from 1887 through 1937, the Reports of the Immigration Commission, 1900–1911, and certificates of naturalization, declarations of intention, and petitions of the Los Angeles Superior Court and the San Diego Superior Court. These records provide information on Chinese exclusion and the deportation and repatriation of Mexicans during the Great Depression. The archives also holds case files of the U.S. District Court, Los Angeles, as well as a profile of the participants in the judicial process provided in the Jury Roll, 1887–1896, and Rolls of Attorneys, 1887–1925. Also useful for the study of ethnic minorities and women in California are the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Office of Economic Opportunity held in the National Archives.

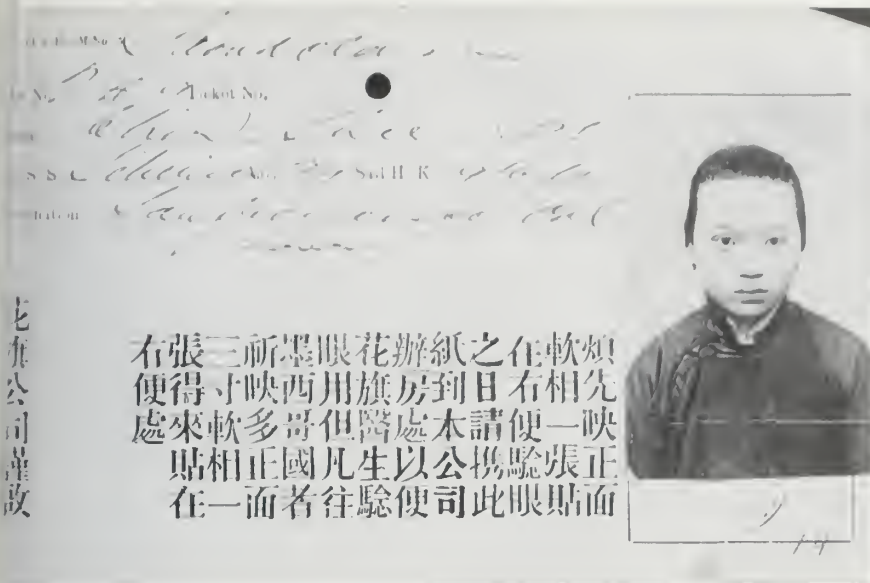
The Pacific Sierra Region of the National Archives holds indexes to passenger lists of vessels arriving at San Francisco between 1893 and 1934, crew lists from 1905 through 1957, and Customs Service pas-

senger lists used by the Immigration and Naturalization Service between 1903 and 1918. There are also lists of Chinese passengers arriving at San Francisco between 1888 and 1914 and Chinese laborers arriving at San Francisco between 1882 and 1888. The Pacific Sierra Region has more than one hundred thousand case files for Chinese, Japanese, and Russian Jews, containing vital statistics, testimony, and photographs created at the Angel Island immigration station as a result of the passage of immigration laws such as numerous Chinese Exclusion acts between 1882 and 1943, and correspondence from the San Francisco Collector of Customs relating to the enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Acts, 1880–1890. Records of the United States District Court for California, Nevada, and Hawaii available in the regional archives include records of naturalization. The region also has on microfilm the records of the War Relocation Authority pertaining to three California relocation centers used during World War II to intern Japanese Americans.

Original documents available at the Pacific Sierra Region include correspondence and employment records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, including the "Outing Center" established in Berkeley in 1916 to place American Indian girls and women in domestic employment. The records of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics include a table dated February 1942, which estimated the impact on agriculture of the anticipated Japanese relocation and internment. Records of the Farm Security Administration include snapshots and newspaper clippings relating to migratory labor camps in California's Central Valley. The region holds records regarding medical care, shelter, and community services provided to domestic and foreign migrant laborers at seventeen of California's migrant labor camps operated by the Farm Security Administration. The Farmers Home Administration records pertain to the importation of Mexican farm laborers in the 1940s, while the records of the Office of Solicitor, Department of Labor, contain information on the Mexican Labor (Bracero) Program, 1950–1964.

Federal district court and court of appeals case files at the Pacific Sierra Region also provide varied insights into the lives of California ethnic minorities. The records of the federal courts also provide information on ethnic populations involved with labor, property, business, and law enforcement. Files of the United States Attorney for the Northern District of California relate to criminal proceedings under the World War I Neutrality Act against the Indian Nationalists' Ghadar Party, headquartered in Sacramento and San Francisco.

Presidential libraries in California are useful



Not just famous men are represented in federal records. The histories of women, men, and children from all countries and classes come alive in archives. The faces of these young Chinese and Japanese brides, as captured in documents from the Angel Island Immigration Station, convey both the hopes and fears of coming to a strange land.

*Left:* Chin Shee, boarding pass for a wife of a Chinese merchant, 1911 (case 10481/10143).

*Below:* Toki Okamoto, Japanese picture bride, ca. 1911 (case 10448/10-3) San Francisco District, Immigration and Naturalization Service, RG 85. Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, San Bruno.

resources for examining executive policies regarding immigration. The Richard M. Nixon Library in Yorba Linda also contains the papers of Patricia Ryan Nixon, and the papers of Nancy Davis Reagan have been deposited at the Ronald Reagan Library in Simi Valley.

The California State Archives in Sacramento, created by the state's first legislature in 1850, is the depository of California's Spanish archives, including the customhouse records and censuses of 1796 and 1798, listing names of foreign residents, and sixteen volumes of records of the California Land Claims Commission, indexed by name of applicant and by name of grant, in Spanish and English. The latter are useful to researchers in women's and ethnic history, since approximately fourteen percent of the Mexican land grants were awarded to women, some of them married. Commission testimony details the women's active involvement in administering the ranchos. The State Archives also has the indexed 1852 California State Census of population and production and the original schedules of the 1860 and 1880 U.S. Census, arranged by county and township, also available on microfilm.

Papers of the office of the secretary of state on deposit in the State Archives include the original working papers of the 1849 constitutional convention, where lengthy debate about extending the franchise to women ultimately resulted in a negative vote. Legislative records include the author's bill files, which consist of analysis, position statements, correspondence, press releases, and more. These are useful files in researching, for example, such legislation as the women's suffrage amendment to the California constitution (1911), the Alien Land Act (1913), or a wife's right to manage and control that



part of community property owned by her (1951). Executive positions on legislation affecting women and ethnic minorities are found in the papers of the governor's office, which include registers of official transactions, letterbooks, petitions, pardons, proclamations, and offers of rewards. The papers of Governor James N. Gillett (1907-1911) are useful in studying official reactions to Japanese objections to restrictive immigration measures that were being considered by the California legislature.

The State Archives also contains the indexed records of the state Court of Appeals and State



Supreme Court, where women landowners like Amparo Burton argued to save her San Diego ranch from American squatters.<sup>4</sup> Litigation affecting ethnic minorities and women is also contained in the county superior court general registers and case files held by the State Archives.

The records of the Department of Education and the State Board of Education, dating from 1861, include the very useful common school reports (1861-1958), which describe the operation of individual schools and districts, reflecting segregated school policies, proportion of female teachers, salaries paid, and composition of school boards, as well as descriptions of local school conditions. Such records shed light on the efforts to use education to Americanize recent immigrants, particularly during the Progressive era.<sup>5</sup>

The State Archives prison records (1850-1950) include evidence on women and minority prisoners and their treatment. Among the most extensive are the records for San Quentin (1851-1924) and Folsom (1880-1945). The archives also contains incident reports and memoranda relating to prison labor at the women's prison at Tehachapi. Statistics and information on the supervision of parolees is available from the women's prison at Corona. There is also a scrapbook relating to women's correctional facilities and twenty-seven volumes of inmate photograph albums, 1888-1920. The records of the California Youth Authority include information on the operation of the Fred C. Nelles School for Boys in Whittier, where girls were detained until 1919, when the Ventura School for Girls was opened. Particularly useful are the personal histories contained in the biographical information. Because of privacy restrictions, only generic information is available regarding the treatment of the mentally ill. But abstracts of commitments and patient summaries are available, for example, in the patient files of Mendocino State Hospital, offering both ethnic- and gender-based research opportunities.

While the California Public Records Act and the Information Practices Act limit access to personnel records less than seventy-five years old, the records of approximately thirty professional and vocational standards agencies in the State Archives are useful. They are filed alphabetically by name of applicant, with some indexing by ethnic groups. Records of the Board of Dental Examiners reveal that women had entered the profession by 1849, although licensing was not required until 1885. Women are widely represented in the records of the Cosmetology Board, where accompanying photographs may sometimes be useful in determining ethnicity. While the Commission on the Status of Women retains its own

records, women are reflected in the State Archives records of the Social Workers Placement Service (1941-1953), the Board of Nurse Examiners (1939-1961), the Board of Nursing Education, and the Nursing Registry (1961-1974). Students of the history of ethnic minorities should examine the records of the Department of Social Welfare-War Service Bureau (1941-1948), which assisted in the Japanese evacuation and in providing assistance to the wives and children of German, Italian, and Japanese enemy aliens placed in internment camps in the early months of World War II. Incorporation records are a rich source of information about businesses operated by minorities and women. These range from Imperial Valley carrot ranches of the Maggio Company, Inc., to the Chinese American Farms, Inc., and from Tillie Lewis's diet foods to Laura Scudder's potato chips and Romana Banuelos's Mexican foods. Fraternal organizations, including ethnic mutual aid societies and their female auxiliaries, also incorporated, yielding information on organizational purpose, location, officers, and rules (1850-1959).

While county archival holdings vary, some are indexed in a number of partial guides, such as Owen C. Coy, *Guide to County Archives of California* (1919), and they contain useful information on ethnic communities. For example, the presence of Chinese farmers in Sierra County is evident in the following documents in the Recorder's Office at Downieville: Bank and Water Claims, Contracts and Agreements, Deeds Grantee-Grantor Index, Lessee-Lessor Index, Mortgages and Leases Index, Placer Claims Index, and Tax Deeds Index. In county archives around the state, crop and chattel mortgages, certificates of sale, personal property mortgages, mining claims, poll tax rolls, and personal property rolls are also useful, as are county coroner's reports. In addition to providing vital statistics, the reports offer extensive testimony not found in other sources, revealing some cases of "instant vigilantism," a euphemistic explanation that the victim was lynched.<sup>6</sup> Also useful are civil and criminal case files and sheriff's department criminal mug books. The *Great Registers* provide information on citizen's country of nativity. Women's names appear in later volumes, for they continued to be used after the vote was extended to California women in 1911.

Additional information on women in county archives can be gleaned from vital records such as marriage and divorce records. Women and children are also represented in welfare registers, applications for relief, and abstracts of indigents. Detailed information on property holdings, indebtedness, family size, and more is available in wills and records in

superior court probate files. Of particular interest are legal records awarding a married business woman "sole trader" status and the right to own separate property. Supporting documents provide property inventories, property locations, and means of acquisition of the property."

The Western History Collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History holds the official book of local registered rancho brands, including that of María Rita Valdez de Villa—who owned Rancho Rodeo de Las Aguas in present-day Beverly Hills—as well as early court records, jail registers, and tax records. Most volumes of the *Great Register of Voters* are available, as are the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, which because of their detailed identification are useful in determining patterns of ethnic residential concentration and business activity. The museum's outstanding nineteenth-century newspaper collection includes ethnic newspapers throughout the state. The collection also includes more than two hundred thousand photographs. Hispanic California is richly reflected in the papers of

Antonio F. Coronel (1817-1894), the Del Valle family (1818-1920), and the Sepulveda-Mott collection (1849-1890).

City archives hold a variety of records relating to ethnic minorities and women. Warrant books, personnel records, public information files, and affirmative action plans indicate their roles as municipal employees. Emergency hospital records, visiting nurses' reports, cemetery records, election records, and police court files reflect the presence of these groups. Abstracts of titles and assessors rolls reveal their ownership of real and personal property. City legislative records are also useful. Nineteenth-century petitions in the Los Angeles city archives bear French, Italian, Spanish, and Basque surnames. There are ordinances regulating houses of ill fame and a report from the Sisters of Charity, who in the 1860s operated a hospital for the city's indigent. In a more contemporary vein, the Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center contains television news archives and 1.5 million photos, many from the *Sacramento Bee*, and many reflecting the experiences



A Sierra Club photograph, ca. 1900, entitled "On the Vernal Fall Bridge," is, for several reasons, a valuable document of the environmental association's early history. It illustrates Yosemite National Park at the turn of the century, when park access was difficult and demanding for everyone. A critical source of historical information on changing attitudes toward preserving the environment, Sierra Club records also reveal a tradition of active participation by its women members, who clearly were not limited to filing letters and serving refreshments at meetings.

*Sierra Club Photo Collection, Joseph N. Le Conte Album, Bancroft Library, University of California.*



of women and ethnic groups. The division also holds oral history interviews with Japanese interned at Walerga Assembly Center, along with interviews with members of twenty-one other ethnic groups in the Sacramento area and with charter members of the local chapter of the American Association of University Women. The center's film library contains more than five hundred thousand feet of television news footage, which provide a record of events ranging from picketing by United Farm Workers to Equal Rights Amendment parades.

Useful business archives include those of Wells Fargo Bank in San Francisco, whose collection includes material on female stagecoach driver Charlie Parkhurst and Julia Jones, a company agent employed at Mariposa. The Bank of America archives, also in San Francisco, contains the first book of minutes of the Bank of Italy, as the bank was originally named, along with a chronology of its early history, personal papers, letters, and newspaper clippings related to the Italian community of San Francisco. That community is also represented in the records, held by the San Francisco Maritime Museum, of Italian boat builders and fishermen's meetings, and in the Italian American Collection at the San Francisco Public Library.

The business of film making is reflected in the Metro Goldwyn Mayer Archives in Culver City, which provides information on both foreign-born and female film stars, as does the archives of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills, which maintains a large collection of oral histories. The Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Museum in Victorville also has material on women in film in its archives, as does the Western Costume Company Research Library, which has movie stills and clippings from 1935 to 1975, in addition to an extensive fashion library. Other media sources for issues affecting women and minorities include the Pacifica Radio Archives in North Hollywood and the holdings of KJEO-TV in Fresno, which has covered major news events occurring in the San Joaquin Valley.

There are also specialized institutional archives, some belonging to religious orders, providing a wealth of information on women's work and the ethnic communities they taught and ministered to. These include the archives of the Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco, the archives of the Sisters of St. Dominic, San Rafael, the records of the Sisters of Mercy, Burlingame, the holdings of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul, Los Altos Hills, the archives of the Dominican Sisters, Mission San Jose (now part of Fremont), the collections of the Sisters of Social Service and the Daughters of St. Joseph,

both in Los Angeles, the documents of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, Orange, and the papers and life-history oral interviews of the California Province of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Belmont, among the nearly thirty archives of women's religious orders in California.

Church archives are equally useful in the search for histories of women and minorities. Publications by churches, including their newspapers and anniversary books, often reflect the ethnic composition of the congregation. Ethnicity and gender are also reflected in church school yearbooks, hospital and social service records, cemetery records, and the hearings of marriage tribunals. Sources of ecclesiastical records include Roman Catholic diocesan chancery archives, the Lutheran History Center of the West, and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. Church records also address California's early European period. Life in Hispanic California is reflected in mission archives, including annual reports and sacramental records, now gathered at Mission Santa Barbara. The archives's De la Guerra collection is particularly useful in its portrayal of daily life and the role of women in Hispanic California.<sup>8</sup> The San Fernando Mission and Historical Museum/Archival Center also collects both ecclesiastical and historical material focusing on the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the California missions. Another repository, the Salvation Army Western Territorial Museum, Rancho Palos Verdes, maintains documentation on the social services provided by the organization in the thirteen western states, although materials on unwed mothers and orphanages are restricted.

Specialized libraries also contain a wealth of archival materials on ethnic groups and women. The Library of the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, for example, holds the papers of approximately three dozen women scientists, ranging from Mary Katherine Brandegee, curator of the California Academy of Sciences for more than two decades beginning in 1883, to anthropologist Jane Goodall. The privately operated Library for Social Studies and Research in Los Angeles holds much information on women and southern California labor history, especially the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union. It also holds the papers of the Los Angeles Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born. Of particular interest are the papers, including a nearly complete run of the *California Eagle*, of African American publisher, activist, and 1953 Progressive Party vice-presidential nominee Charlotta Bass. The library also has the papers of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the Los Angeles branch of the

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Other specialized archival collections include Citizens for Farm Labor, Forestville, which focuses on the Bracero program and the unionization of agricultural workers, the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern California in San Francisco, and the Baker Memorial Library and Archives of ONE, Inc., Los Angeles, which has extensive holdings on female homosexuality. Visual Communications, Southern California Asian American Studies Center, Inc., in Los Angeles, contains over two hundred thousand items associated with Asian Pacific American families and their education, economy, and immigration between the 1890s and the 1980s. The Annequin Museum Archives in Santa Monica is a private collection specializing in nineteenth- and twentieth-century women's fashions. Sports archives that document the participation of ethnic groups and women range from the archives of the Tournament of Roses Association in Pasadena to the Amateur Athletic Foundation in Los Angeles, the largest sports library in the nation. It maintains a news-clipping file on one hundred fifty thousand sports personalities, as well as records of the Olympic Games since 1896.

It has been estimated that there are more than eight hundred ethnic archives, libraries, and museums in the United States.<sup>9</sup> These include the Western Jewish History Center of the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum in Berkeley, whose archives include the records of the San Francisco chapter of Hadassah, the records of Emanu-El Residence Club, San Francisco, the Home for Girls, and the papers of Temple Sinai Women's Group, Oakland, along with a number of oral histories. The Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles, has copies of all materials in the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Los Angeles, Peter M. Kahn Jewish Community Library, contains materials on the Jews of Los Angeles from the 1800s to the present. The Jewish Historical Society of Southern California has materials ranging from synagogue records to personal memorabilia from 1898 to the present. Hebrew Union College's Frances Henry Library contains materials on the American Jewish experience in the western hemisphere.

The Chinese Historical Society of Los Angeles, the Chinese Cultural Center in San Francisco, and the Chinese Historical Society of America, with headquarters in San Francisco, all have materials on the Chinese in California in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Japanese American National Museum of Los Angeles has materials on Japanese American history and culture from 1885 to the present, including an extensive photographic collection that documents the history of Japanese in the West.

The Japanese American Historical Society in San Francisco also holds records. The Korean Cultural Center in Los Angeles and the Institute of Buddhist Studies Archives Collection in Berkeley are also useful for studying ethnic history. Collections pertaining to specific ethnic groups can also be found at the J.A. Freitas Library of the Portuguese Union of the State of California in San Leandro, the Museum of Russian Culture, Inc., in San Francisco, and the Philippine Resource Center in Berkeley. Additional collections are available at the Centro Cultural De La Raza in San Diego, the California Afro-American Museum Research Library in Los Angeles, the Northern California Center for Afro-American History and Life in Oakland, and the San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society Library. Collections dealing specifically with women's history include the Feminist History Research Project in Los Angeles, the National Women's History Project in Windsor, and the Women's History Research Center, Berkeley.

Historical societies also provide archival material on women and ethnic communities.<sup>10</sup> While the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco is an all-male organization, it has records relating to women and ethnic immigrants as well as a women's auxiliary and the Daughters of California Pioneers. The archives of the Native Daughters of the Golden West in San Francisco cover from 1886 to the present. The manuscript holdings in the North Baker Library of the California Historical Society (CHS), San Francisco, reflect the ethnic cosmopolitanism of California in numerous collections, including the papers of the Campodonica family, and those of Katherine R. Maurer, who was appointed by the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Church to serve as a deaconess to the U.S. Immigration Service on Angel Island. Among its many resources are Chinese materials, including marriage certificates, found throughout the collection. The CHS library's Kemble Collection of fine printing includes the only complete file of the *Pacific Union Printer*, which contains information on the state's earliest women printers. The historical society's library also includes material on nineteenth-century businesswoman and African American rights activist Mary Ellen Pleasant. The records of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of northern California provide information on a range of issues, including Japanese internment.

Women are represented in numerous collections, including overland diaries, found in the California Historical Society library. Of particular importance in studying the nineteenth-century social history of San Francisco are the thirty volumes of Susannah



Hyde Braly's diaries, extending from 1867 to 1896. Other large collections include the papers of the Baby Hygiene Committee of the American Association of University Women, as well as the records of the Girls High School, San Francisco, the records of the California Federation of Women's Clubs, 1931-1971, and the archives of both the San Francisco chapter and the state organization of the League of Women Voters. Also of interest are the six volumes of records of the philanthropic group, the Doctors Daughters Organization. The records of Heritage House, formerly the San Francisco Ladies Protection and Relief Society, extending from 1854 to 1969, are also available. To Cora Older's nine volumes on women's rights, collected from the turn of the century, the CHS library has added manuscripts and oral histories on more recent feminist crusades, as well as interviews with women active in radical left movements and in union organizing efforts, including the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the Cannery, and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union, and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. The California Historical Society's southern California photograph collection, housed in the department of special collections at the University of Southern California Library in Los Angeles, contains rich bodies of images, particularly of California Native Americans.

The San Mateo County Historical Association and Museum is typical of archival collections maintained by local historical societies. It holds material on the Ladies Aid of the First Methodist Church, Burlingame, the minutes of the Girls' Club of Colma, and the records of the Red Cross of San Mateo County. The Costa Mesa Historical Society has materials on women military personnel serving at the Santa Ana Army Air Base during World War II. The extensive research archives of the San Diego Historical Society includes six hundred oral history tapes and 1.5 million photos, many of them pertaining to women and ethnic groups.

Libraries throughout the state also represent fruitful manuscript sources related to various ethnic minorities and to women. A premier example is the California Section of the State Library at Sacramento, established in 1903. It contains more than six hundred processed collections focusing on all of California, as well as the immediate Sacramento region. Collections include hotel registers and ledgers, as well as diaries and women's reminiscences recalling overland or trans-Isthmian travel to California.<sup>11</sup> The State Library's varied resources include the U.S. Census population schedules for California for 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, and 1910, mortality schedules for 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880, and the California State

Census for 1852. The library also holds an extensive collection of the *Great Register of Voters*, city directories, and a nearly-complete file of California telephone books back to 1897, as well as many Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. The collection is enhanced by compilations made by the Daughters of the American Revolution, including baptismal records for Los Angeles County, 1771-1873, California cemetery records, marriage records for Los Angeles County, 1876-1888, early wills from various counties, and vital records gleaned from San Francisco newspapers published during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The State Library's extensive collection of photographs and ephemera, reflecting all aspects of life, and the ample collection of cartoons in its pictorial files document, among other subjects, the anti-Chinese movement and the controversy surrounding the suffragist crusade. Particularly useful is the California Information File, consisting of approximately one million references to people, places, and events in California. A biographical card file consists of data on artists, actors, authors, and other notables who filled out biographical cards when the library opened in 1903. Other collections include family histories donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Pioneer Roster of the Native Daughters of the Golden West. The reference collection in the State Library's general collection contains an index to African Americans in selected newspapers, censuses, and other sources, organized by name and subject by compiler James Abajian. The collection also holds more than 2,400 titles of California newspapers, including a wide variety of ethnic publications. The State Library also holds the original documents and legal records pertaining to the granting of Spanish and Mexican ranchos and subsequent litigation surrounding their titles. The Sutro Library, the San Francisco branch of the California State Library, one of the largest genealogy collections west of Salt Lake City, contains about one hundred thousand family histories, as well as specialized files and indexes like the surname card file and "the book of the dead," containing early San Francisco mortuary records useful to researchers in ethnic and women's history.

Public libraries throughout the state offer special collections focusing on particular ethnic and women's groups. The Los Angeles County Library system operates resource centers specializing in the history of Chicanos, African Americans, and Asian and Pacific Islanders. Materials on both women's affairs and ethnic relations are available at the Riverside City/County Public Library. The San Francisco Public Library has an extensive collection

Italians in California. The Potrero Hill Branch of the San Francisco Public Library contains oral interviews with Russian Molokans who fled Czarist Russia in the early 1900s. The History Room of the Anaheim Public Library is rich in sources relating to the German Americans who settled Anaheim in the 1850s. There are family papers, legal briefs, and business records of the German American Bank, the Los Angeles Vineyard Company, and others.

In recent years, the city of Los Angeles Public Library, through its Shades of L.A. Project, has expanded its photographic holdings of Filipinos, Pacific Islanders, Koreans, Japanese, Chinese, Armenians, Palestinians, Jews, African Americans, and Native Americans. The system's Langston Hughes Memorial Library branch has materials on blacks, Asians, and Hispanics in the performing arts. Among its archival holdings related to women's history, the San Diego Public Library, California Room, has records of the San Diego County Federation of Women's Clubs, the Ladies Annex of the San Diego County Chamber of Commerce, and the La Jolla Garden Club. The Warner Research Collection in the Burbank Public Library has extensive material on motion picture production and costume design. Singers and dancers, many of them women of various ethnic groups, are represented in the archives of the San Francisco Opera Library and in the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum.

The collections of the Huntington Library stand out among those of all private libraries in California. Many of its archival collections document the life of Hispanics in early California. The Chapman and Wright collections include copies and transcripts of important documents from the Archivo General de las Indias and the Archivo General de México. The Abel Stearns papers and those of José de la Guerra y Norriega are especially useful in reconstructing the life of the *californios*. The library also holds a nearly complete run of *El Clamor Público*, the Spanish-language newspaper published in Los Angeles from 1855 through 1859, which contains references to *californio* office holders and members of the Democratic Party Central Committee, as well as Hispanic organizations, their articles of incorporation, and their leadership. The Richard Gird papers include a full run of another newspaper, the *Chino Champion* which reflects widespread support for the anti-Chinese clubs that sprang up across the state in the 1870s and 1880s. The California file lists letters describing Chinese workers in the gold fields. A particular treasure is the fifty-year diary of John Carlson, a Swedish immigrant to Orange County. Also available are the papers of German agriculturist



This vivid red-brown watercolor drawing, ca. 1931, by an unidentified Indian student from the Fort Yuma Agency in California, was created for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Superintendent of Indian Education, Sacramento, to illustrate the variety of Indian art designs found in the American West. Like the example on the front cover of this issue, this traditional image also suggests the range of materials held by the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, San Bruno. *Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region.*

Matthew Keller, one of the founders of the Los Angeles Vineyard Company. The O'Melveny and Dockweiler collections document the longstanding German and Irish presence in southern California. More contemporary ethnic issues are represented in the papers of former Mayor Fletcher Bowron and former County Supervisor John Anson Ford.

The Huntington's holdings in women's history are also extensive. In addition to the extensive papers of Caroline Maria Severance reflecting her civic involvement and leadership in the women's club movement, there are items documenting Mary Jane Megquier's travel to California during the Gold Rush and her operation of a San Francisco boarding house from 1855 through 1859. Mary Foy, a teacher and the city's third librarian, is represented in five hundred items that also reflect her civic activism. The papers of another club organizer, Harriet Russel Strong, underscore her leadership as an agriculturist, inventor, and water-resource specialist. The papers of Jeanne C. Carr of Pasadena reveal her involvement in experimental agriculture and silk-worm production. One of the largest women's collections belongs to clubwoman and civic leader Clara Burdette, state president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. The papers of other activists dedicated to suffrage and reform include



Elizabeth Morrison Harbert, Alice Locke Park, and Sara Bard Field, whose papers constitute a large part of the Charles Erskine Scott Wood Collection. Of interest are the papers of Louise Watkins, who in 1935 organized the southern California Republican Women's Club. Mary Austin, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Ina Coolbrith, California's poet laureate from 1906 until her death in 1932, are but a few of the literary figures represented in the Huntington's collections. The Grace Nicholson Collection reflects the Pasadena art dealer's vast knowledge of both Native American and Oriental art and includes her numerous photo albums documenting Native American culture in California and the rest of the Far West and Southwest at the turn of the century.<sup>12</sup>

The southern California branch of the Archives of American Art of the Smithsonian Institution is located in the Virginia Steel Scott Gallery on the grounds of the Huntington Library. The northern regional branch, which holds microfilm records only, is located at the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco. Both branches include manuscript collections, oral interviews, and videotape programs with artists, architects, sculptors, photographers, and specialists in decorative folk art, many of them women and representatives of minority groups. There are also interviews with curators, collectors, art dealers, and art historians.

The libraries of California's post-secondary institutions also have extensive collections contributing to understanding the history of California's women and minorities. At the forefront is the Bancroft Library of the University of California at Berkeley. Its earliest original document is the diary of Juan Bautista de Anza's second expedition to California in 1775–1776, during which women gave birth and the young widow, María Feliciano Arballo y Gutiérrez, provoked remonstrances for her flirtatiousness from the Franciscan chaplain, Padre Pedro Font. The core of the Bancroft's collection, the papers of California historian Hubert Howe Bancroft, contains original and copies of mission records, including a book of marriages and several census records. Bancroft also acquired the papers of *californios*, the largest collection being that of Mariana Guadalupe Vallejo. Along with the Castro, Pico, and Estudillo papers, they provide insight into *californio* life. Of particular interest to students of women's history are the several *recuerdos*, or women's reminiscences, including those of mission administrators Eulalia Perez and Apolinaria Lorenzana, Isadora Solano, wife of a Suisun Indian chief, and *californianas* Felipa Marron, María Inocenta Avila, and María Casarin Ord, among others.<sup>13</sup> Other early documents include the journal kept by Italian ship's doctor Paolo Emilio Botta, during a visit to California (1826–1829).

The history of ethnic groups after American acquisition of California is captured at the Bancroft Library in the letters of James Riordan and the Scanlon family, and the papers of James D. Phelan of San Francisco and Thomas J. Mooney, among others. The papers of Hiram Johnson and Victor H. Metcalf contain material on anti-Asian sentiment and policies in California. The John J. Manion papers include his observations in San Francisco's Chinatown (1926–1946). The records of the California Division of Immigration and Housing (1913–1937) contain inspection reports on labor camps, also addressed in Paul S. Taylor's papers on Mexican labor in the United States (1927–1932). Material prepared by the U.S. Attorney General's office provides preevacuation information on Japanese in California, and the papers of Wayne Collins contain case files on Peruvian Japanese detained in the United States, East Indian deportation, and Japanese renunciants (1945–1964). Evelyn McCool's papers record Japanese relocation in 1942. Various ethnic groups are included in "Monographs Prepared for a Documentary History of Farm Labor," published by the Federal Writers Project (1938). The Bancroft's many women's collections include the papers of suffragist Anne H. Martin, philanthropist Phoebe Apperson Hearst, anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker, pioneering sociologist Mary Roberts Smith Coolidge, federal judge Annette Abbot Adams, writer Theodora Kroeber Quinn, and Democratic National Committeewoman for California Clara Shirpsen.

The Regional Oral History Collection of the Bancroft Library provides additional resources for the study of women and ethnic groups. Tapes exist on African American theater, Asian Americans, nurses, working women, and army wives. The "Stockton Project" consists of sixty interviews with Stockton women who emigrated from Europe, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. Another twenty-three tapes describe Japanese evacuation and relocation. Among the oral history subjects are photographers Dorothea Lange and Imogen Cunningham, and Elizabeth Snyder, California's first woman state party chairman. The University of California, Berkeley, Women's Resource Center Library, the Center for Chicano Studies, and the Asian American Studies Center are also useful sources for ethnic and gender research.

Other campuses of the University of California have specialized collections, including the records of the California Nurses Association, at the San Francisco campus, and records of the Knapp School of Nursing at Santa Barbara. Various other special collections associated with centers of study can be useful. These include the Women's Resources and Research Center and the California Institute of Rural



#### "LATCHON! TEACHON!"

Women volunteer in California received free training in tractor operation in a program to alleviate World War I labor shortage. After completing their training, the women were paid \$25 to \$30 per week plus a bonus for each acre plowed. Despite fears that women would undercut men's wages, be given tasks beyond their strength, be worked excessive hours, and not be properly housed, the Women's Land Army urged every able-bodied woman in California to pass a physical examination and spend four weeks of the summer harvesting crops. From the History File of the California Food Administration, 1919; Speakers Bureau; California Food Administration (San Francisco); Records of the U.S. Food Administration, RG 4.

*Courtesy National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, San Bruno.*

Studies at Davis, the Southeast Asian Archives at Irvine, and the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at San Diego. Special Collections at the Riverside campus holds the papers of Japanese Americans in the Riverside Research Project.

UCLA sponsors the Chicano Studies Center and the Latin American Center, as well as the Japanese American Research Project (1899-1977). The JARP materials are housed in the Department of Special Collections, which also holds the archives of the Relocation Center at Manzanar, as well as microfilm copies of the papers of the U.S. Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians.<sup>14</sup> Also at UCLA are the records of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) project no. 3105, in which southern California writers gathered materials in the 1930s for a guide to California, and which includes numerous interviews with immigrants ranging from France to the West Indies. Both ethnic and gender issues are addressed in the 220,000 negatives and photos from the Los Angeles *Daily News* (1923-1954).

The study of Latino life in the region held in the UCLA Special Collections ranges from a translated version of the baptismal record of the Los Angeles Plaza Church from 1844 through 1879 to the papers of recently retired Congressman Edward R. Roybal. The papers of Carey McWilliams contain much information about Mexicans in Los Angeles, as does the Alice Greenfield McGrath Collection, which focuses on the infamous Sleepy Lagoon case, in which young Latinos were collectively tried and convicted of murder (1942-1945).

The papers of Austrian architect Richard Neutra,

German composer Ernst Toch, writer Franz Werfel, and British writers Aldous Huxley and Christopher Isherwood provide insights into the émigré communities of southern California. The contributions of women are reflected in a substantial number of collections, including the papers of writer Olive Percival, botanist Mildred Mathias, dancer Ruth St. Denis, plant specialist Theodosia B. Shepherd, arts patron and philanthropist Dorothy Buffum Chandler, and California Superior Court Judge Georgia Bullock. The UCLA music library contains collections of women composers, performers, and music educators. The UCLA Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology maintains files on ethnic folklore. The Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library allows limited access for statistical use to its suicide file.

Libraries in the California State University system hold a variety of collections. California State University, Bakersfield, has oral history tapes focusing on local Basque and Chinese communities. California State University, Fresno, houses an Armenian studies program that includes Armenian publications, and imprints held in the Special Collections library. California State University, Fullerton, has a Chicano Resource Center and an oral history program that has investigated the history of Scandinavians, Jews, Chicanos, African Americans, and Japanese Americans. California State University, Long Beach, maintains oral history archives that include interviews with local women of various ethnic groups, with a particular emphasis on World War II in the "Rosie the Riveter Revisited Project." The



history of California women is also addressed in the Women Studies Collection at CSU Sacramento, and in the Salazar Library at CSU Sonoma. The women artists archives there contain six thousand slides and an information file on 192 artists.

Special Collections at California State University, Northridge, contains material on Asian Americans, including the Heart Mountain Relocation Center. In addition to the extensive collection of opera star Helen Traubel, there are music scores by women composers and the Cohen Collection on Women Composers. CSUN's Urban Archives Center contains extensive records on Braceros, Charros, and Chicano Studies, along with material on eastern European immigrants, Japanese Americans, the Jewish community, and ethnic discrimination. Women are represented by the collections of Justice Rose Bird, newspaperwoman Agness Underwood, the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles, the YWCA, the Hollywood Studio Club, and the Actresses's Residence, among others. The Geography Library contains 320,000 maps, including Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and maps depicting ethnic residential patterns based on census data. The Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University, includes the papers of waitress and union officer Linda Bazan and materials pertaining to Household Workers' Rights (1982–1986). Records of the following unions are available: Bookbinders and Bindery Women's Union, Local 31-125 (1902–1970); Department Store Employees Local 1100 (1937–1981); International Ladies Garment Workers Union, San Francisco Joint Board (1931–1947); and Retail Store Employees Union, Local 41 ØR (1909–1984). The Chicano Library Resource Center at San Jose State University is useful in the study of the Chicano movement from the 1960s through the 1980s. The John Byrne Collection in the university library provides extensive material on California's Irish American community.

Private college and university libraries offer a variety of materials pertinent to the topics of gender and ethnicity. The Holt-Atherton Center for Western Studies, University of the Pacific, Stockton, has collections on the Chinese of San Francisco, Japanese relocation, and the Jews of Sacramento and Stockton. UOP collections pertaining to women include the School Women's Club Records of Oakland, Camp Fire Girls of San Joaquin County, and the papers of a number of writers, teachers, and businesswomen. Santa Clara University's Special Collections, in the Orradre Library, contains material on Mexican American and migrant farm workers and oral histories of women at SCU (1961–1970) and Japanese farmers in the Santa Clara Valley (1895–1945). The F. W. Olin

Library at Mills College contains material on women's education from 1852 to the present. The Honnold Library of the Claremont Colleges has oral histories of Parisian expatriots and about "Little Tokyo" in Los Angeles, while the Rude-Frankenfield papers there reflect the lives of six generations of women living in southern California. The library also has an extensive collection of papers and memorabilia belonging to opera star Ernestine Schuman Heink. Scripps College, Dennison Library, has many of the papers of philanthropist and founder Ellen Browning Scripps. The Claremont Colleges' Tomas Rivera Center should be consulted for material on the history of Latinos.

The Stanford University Oral History Archives holds tapes covering the history of the *Aurora Collective*, the campus feminist newspaper. The Stanford Library's Department of Special Collections has papers pertaining to the United Farm Workers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, AFL-CIO (1959–1971), in the Anne Draper papers. Among other collections are the papers of author/artist Mary Hallock Foote, singer Jenny Lind, political activist Angela Davis, Alice M. Rose, who was associated with the Lincoln-Roosevelt Republican League, and the Leland Stanford family, which includes information on Jane Stanford, philanthropist and co-founder of the university.

The Doheny Library of the University of Southern California holds translated copies of the De la Guerra papers, which shed light on Hispanic California. The history of ethnic groups in Los Angeles was extensively documented in the 1920s and 1930s in the research of Professor Emory S. Bogardus and his students. His papers are in Special Collections, and the research information is in the University Reference Library. The approximately one million photos and the Hearst newspaper collection are a fruitful source of information on California women and minorities, as are the papers of former Governor Jerry Brown, which reveal the extent to which women and minority members were named to the six thousand commission and board appointments made during his tenure. The Doheny Library also holds John M. Scott's papers of the United Negro Improvement Association and those of political leader Yvonne Brathwaite Burke. The Lion Feuchtwanger Memorial Library in Special Collections contains materials on German émigré writers and some items associated with his wife, Marta Feuchtwanger.

USC's Arnold Schoenberg Institute supplements the composer's papers with a number of oral interviews with his associates. The School of Religion has nearly one hundred oral histories of Armenian Californians, largely from the Fresno area. Ethnic mate-



A gathering of northern California Sikhs, ca. 1910. Courtesy California State Library.

rials are also available in the Korean Heritage Library. The Social Work Library contains the California Social Welfare Archives, biographies of prominent California social workers, and materials associated with California social welfare history. The University's Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Foundation Collection, one of the nation's strongest academic television archives, includes the files of Warner Bros., Hal Roach, and Universal Studios, and the papers of actress Fay Wray. Women's issues are reflected in several other USC collections. Oral histories include over a thousand interviews with members of the motion picture industry, many of them women. The Library of Aeronautical History Collection contains the records of the Women's International Association of Aeronautics (1929-1959).<sup>18</sup>

There is general agreement that much of the history of women and minority groups is still to be written. A brief examination of the archival holdings in California suggests that rich and illuminating mate-

rial is available, awaiting interpretation and the opportunity to become part of the recaptured past of the long-silent segment of the state's population.

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See notes beginning on page 109.

Gloria Ricci Lothrop, honored as a Fellow of the California Historical Society in 1994, holds the W.P. Whitsett Chair in California History at California State University, Northridge. The writer, who received her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California in 1970, has authored a number of studies, including *Recollections of the Flathead Mission* (1978), *Pomona, a Centennial History* (1987), and *A Guide to the History of California* (1989), of which she was co-editor. In her more than four score articles she has focused largely on the history of minorities and women in the American West—particularly California.



Edited by James J. Rawls



Asian immigrant workers picking oranges near Santa Ana, ca. 1895.  
Editorial Office Collection.

## *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California.*

By Tomás Almaguer. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, xii, 282pp., \$40.00 cloth, \$15.00 paper.)

*Reviewed by Charles Wollenberg, instructor of history at Vista College, Berkeley, and author of Photographing the Second Gold Rush: Dorothea Lange and The East Bay at War, 1941–1945 (Heyday Books, 1996).*

Nowhere are the relationships between race and class more important and complex than in California. The Gold Rush produced America's most ethnically diverse population and created a dynamic capitalist economy that pitted groups against each other in struggles for wealth and status. Tomás Almaguer has attempted to delineate these relationships in an innovative and largely successful analysis of California society during the last half of the nineteenth century.

Almaguer argues that none of the common models of American ethnic relations—the binary system of black-white inter-

action, the concept of immigration assimilation, or the Marxist emphasis on class conflict—works in the California case. Instead he adopts the sociological idea of "racial formation," in which the European American majority "racializes" other groups, assigning them subservient economic and social roles to maintain the principle and practice of white supremacy. In late nineteenth-century California, Indians were relegated to a status of primitive "demons of the forest," but Mexicans were considered "half civilized," Mexican women from prominent *californio* families even marrying European men. The small black population was a symbolic threat to the dominant ideal of "free (white) labor," while Chinese and Japanese residents were regarded as real threats to the economic interests of white workers and small entrepreneurs.

Books sent to *California History* for review that are not chosen for review, but pertain to the collection, are catalogued in the library of the California Historical Society.



Annie and John Bidwell seated in the garden at their home in Chico, ca. late nineteenth century. Courtesy Special Collections, Meriam Library, California State University, Chico, and the Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park.



Almaguer illustrates and supports his thesis with six analytical and narrative chapters dealing with Mexicans, Indians, African Americans, Chinese, and Japanese. The Mexican chapters are particularly informative and include original research on the fate of Ventura County *californios* after statehood and the 1902 Oxnard Strike of Mexican and Japanese farm workers. Almaguer also includes intelligent discussions of blacks, Indians, and Chinese based primarily on relevant secondary sources.

Japanese workers, however, are covered largely as part of the story of the Oxnard Strike, and as important as that struggle may be, it only reveals a small part of the range of social and economic roles played by Japanese residents in turn-of-the-century California. Almaguer's choice of narrative topics also gives the book too great a rural focus; only the Chinese chapter deals seriously with urban labor issues in what was one of the nation's most urbanized states. While the Oxnard Strike is a dramatic example of inter-ethnic cooperation, Almaguer largely ignores the tragic conflicts between non-white groups that often occurred—substantial African American support for the anti-Chinese movement, for example. Finally, the book should have paid more attention to the diversity of the white population. Even if racialization meant a substantial degree of "white solidarity," it did not rule out all serious conflict between various white religious and national groups, nor did it mean that all white groups responded to various "minorities" in the same manner.

These criticisms are not meant to diminish the book's substantial achievements. Almaguer's narratives are well written and informative, and he has shown that the racial formation concept is an enormously valuable tool in understanding the dynamic complexities of race and class that underlay California's multiethnic society.

### *Dear General: The Private Letters of Annie E. Kennedy and John Bidwell, 1866-1868.*

Edited by Linda Rawlings-McDonald. (Sacramento: California State Department of Parks and Recreation, 1993, v, 213 pp., \$19.95 cloth.)

*Reviewed by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., professor emeritus of history, University of Southern California, and editor, since 1962, of the Southern California Quarterly, the publication of the Historical Society of Southern California.*

In 1865, John Bidwell was elected to the House of Representatives, where he served a single term as a congressman. But that election proved a major turning point in his bachelor life. By happenstance he met Joseph C. G. Kennedy and was introduced to the family, among whom was a stunningly beautiful daughter, Annie, age twenty-six. Bidwell, twenty years her senior, was smitten. Beginning on December 31, 1866, he initiated a steady correspondence that Annie gladly entered into with fervent zeal. From that initial letter, what unfolds for the reader is a very prim and proper Victorian-era courtship via pen and paper.

But at the outset there was a major barrier to any prospect of marriage, namely the state of Bidwell's religious beliefs. Annie's deep-seated Christianity—she was a devout Presbyterian—was a motivating force in her life. She dedicated herself to convincing a skeptical Bidwell to accept Christ's teachings. Although she never stated it outright, she made it clear that without his conversion, there was only personal friendship in the offing, not marriage.

Returning to California in the late spring of 1867, Bidwell



resumed his residence on his 20,000-acre ranch near Chico, the town he had earlier founded. For the rest of that fateful year the two continued to write lengthy letters on matters both personal and spiritual. Finally, Bidwell got his religious house in order by joining the local Methodist Episcopal Church in July, much to Annie's delight. The stumbling block to a more intimate result was thus removed.

Returning East in January 1868 to resume his seat in Congress, the formal courtship commenced in earnest, culminating in marriage on April 10 in the Kennedy home. Among the attendees were generals U.S. Grant and William T. Sheridan.

John and Annie's letters, ably edited in this volume, record a courtship of great sensitivity and profundity. These letters mirror the hearts and minds of the correspondents with an intensity that is hard to believe at times, though true it is. Along with philosophical discourse, one also gleans how each individual grew as a person under the interactive influence of the other's personality. It is an unfolding Victorian drama of genuine sincerity and beauty, one to be marveled at and appreciated by any reader of these very touching "love letters."

## *An Historical Geography Analysis of the Modoc Indian War.*

By Gregory A. Reed. (Chico: Association for Northern California Records and Research, 1991. vii, 121 pp., \$13.50 paper, plus \$2.50 postage and handling.)

*Reviewed by Richard H. Dillon, professor of history, Froum Institute, University of San Francisco; Sutro Librarian Emeritus; author of Burnt-Out Fires.*

It's true; you cannot judge a book by its cover. Nor even by the general appearance of its "innards." This volume is a case in point. It is a soft-bound, stapled pamphlet, rather than a book. Its rather amateurish look, doubtless due to a paucity of funds, works against it. The booklet appears to be a photo-offset production from typescript of unjustified lines (margin) and rather small type. In short, this is a homely effort compared to today's camera-ready, computerized print-outs.

But on the other hand, the contents *are* worthwhile. This is a bona fide addition to our too-short shelf of books on the Modoc War, whereas some of the crispy computer stuff we see is all packaging and no content.

The author overstates the neglect of the factor of geography—topography, terrain—in books on the war by Murray, Thompson, this reviewer, and others. But he is right in re-stressing its importance as a cause of the war, besides being the main reason for the Army's tactics, and several defeats, in and around Captain Jack's Stronghold. For while pragmatic whites consid-

ered the incredibly rough Modoc Lava Beds, per se, to be worthless, they saw Tule Lake's Lost River Valley as marginal farmland and quite good ranchland, well worth the taking. But the Modoc tribe knew this small region as the very center, the heart, of their known world.

The "nuisance" of the Modocs' presence on modestly desirable land was supposedly solved by an 1864 treaty removing them to the Klamath Indian Reservation. But it was only natural for the Modocs to rebel at harassment by the more numerous Klamaths, their long-time enemies. So they bolted back to their volcanic heartland. To the U. S. government, a deal was a deal. So troops were sent to drag the runaways back to the reservation. The result of the usual bureaucratic bungling of Washington was a bloody, costly, and totally unnecessary war (1872-73) in California's northeasternmost corner, one in which there were a few heroes on each side, but plenty of atrocities, too, on both sides.

In backgrounding the war, the author is, perhaps, a bit more critical of white massacres than of those committed by Indians. But he admits that the romanticized Modocs did trade slaves for guns and ammunition. (And, thankfully, he tells the story objectively, without preaching, or the absurd, and dishonest, politically correct posturing of the "Soviet encyclopedia" school of revisionist polemics.) Reed has done his homework, too, researching government documents and newspapers of the 1870s, as well as both primary and secondary book sources. He also adds endnotes and a good bibliography.

It is unfortunate that the Association for Northern California Records and Research (ANCRR) is so under-financed, and hence little-known, among the mass of California historians, anthropologists, geographers, and history buffs. Readers of this study will look forward to checking out other titles. Reed's is the sixteenth in the series from the ANCRR (Box 3024, Chico, 95927-3024). Some of the authors of earlier, interesting monographs may be familiar names—Norris Bleyhl of Chico State; Andrew Osborne of Red Bluff; and the unforgettable W. H. (Hutch) Hutchinson of Chico.

## *Henry Edwards Huntington: A Biography.*

By James Thorpe. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, xii, 623 pp., \$35.00 cloth.)

*Reviewed by R. Hal Williams, professor of history at Southern Methodist University and author of The Democratic Party and California Politics, 1880-1896.*

There is a story in southern California about a young girl and her mother who took the trolley to the beach. Whose trolley is this? the girl asked. Huntington's, her mother answered.

What park are we passing? Huntington Park was the answer. What beach are we going to? Huntington Beach. "Mother," the young girl said, "does Mr. Huntington own the ocean or does it still belong to God?"

How Henry Edwards Huntington came to own (and shape) so much of southern California is the subject of James Thorpe's generous new biography. Born in 1850 in Oneonta, New York, Huntington had the good fortune to be the nephew of Collis P. Huntington, one of the famous Big Four. Starting as manager of his uncle's sawmill, Edward served Collis as officer of a number of railroads, including from 1892 to 1900 the Southern Pacific itself.

Inheriting some of his uncle's fortune in 1900, a fortune he increased by marrying Collis's widow a dozen years later, Huntington focused more and more on southern California, a land he loved. "To my mind," he once wrote, "it's the greatest place on earth and I've yet to meet anyone who has been there who doesn't agree with me." Purchasing a local railroad, in 1901 he incorporated the Pacific Electric Railway, which he used to promote real estate, including his own huge holdings. By 1910 his trolley systems measured some 1,300 miles—making him, a newspaper said, "the modern Colossus of Roads"—and along with real estate development, created the design of present-day Los Angeles and its suburbs.

After 1910 Huntington turned to book collecting, putting together an extraordinary library of rare books and manuscripts relating to England and the United States. Soon he added paintings by Gainsborough and others, and he surrounded his home in San Marino with a lovely botanical garden. Home, library, and garden he gave to the public before he died in 1927. Asked if he wanted a biography of himself, Huntington replied he did not. "This library will tell the story. It represents the reward of all the work I have ever done and the realization of much happiness."

But Huntington would surely like this biography, for James Thorpe examines his life in warm and favorable detail. A former director of the Huntington Library, Thorpe has carefully combed Huntington's personal papers, and he describes a person of vision and idealism, a hard worker, a kindly man who loved both books and people. The biography is strongest on the development of the library, though Thorpe touches on all the major events in Huntington's life.

Important pieces of the puzzle are missing; Thorpe does not place Huntington in the larger contexts of his period. Readers wanting to find analysis of railroad enterprise, corporate development, real estate, and suburban growth will need to look elsewhere, including William B. Friedrichs's fine study of Huntington, published in 1992.

In this substantial biography, James Thorpe has given us a gracious and gentle portrait of one of southern California's most important figures.

## *San Francisco Murals: Community Creates Its Muse.*

By Timothy W. Drescher. (St. Paul, Minnesota: Pogo Press, 1994, 128 pp., \$19.95 paper.)

*Reviewed by David Robertson, professor of English at the University of California, Davis.*

*San Francisco Murals* contains a thorough survey of murals painted in San Francisco and the east bay from the 1960s to the early 1990s. This survey is preceded by a brief history of mural making from paleolithic times through the era of the New Deal. It is followed by a section on technical matters, such as surfaces and paints, and by an excellent section on "Murals in the Nineties." A list of murals in San Francisco and the east bay and a good index conclude the book.

Drescher, an instructor in the Department of Humanities at San Francisco State University, is at his best in describing the genesis and themes of individual murals. His discussion of artists of special historical significance, such as Dewey Crumpler and the Haight-Ashbury Muralists, is also insightful. I especially liked his discussion of the change in tone from political to apolitical images that occurred in the 1970s and eighties.

One problem is brevity. In this day and time, when one feels that almost everything, from books to movies, might well benefit from an editing job by Edward Scissorhands, the reader of *San Francisco Murals* usually wants Drescher to say more. Many of his sections are certain to leave the lay reader searching for additional arrows that point from one section of the text (or the city) to another and for signs that lead to the tops of hills with a commanding view of Bay Area mural territory.

A more serious problem is Drescher's failure to discuss in a general fashion what the San Francisco Muse has to say. The premise of the book is that a community creates its own muse to tell itself what it is all about, what really matters to it. The subtitle leads readers to expect Drescher to address this issue. He does not. To be sure, here and there are threads that might be woven together to make a portrait of San Francisco's Muse. But readers are going to have to sit down at the loom and do the work themselves.

In short, this is a good book, an interesting book, a competently researched one. Readers should not expect, however, for artistic, social, and political issues raised by the murals to be discussed at great length or in great depth.





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Historical Society. For an analysis of the "Ramona Myth" see Phil Brigandi and John W. Robinson, "The Killing of Juan Diego: From Murder to Mythology," *Journal of San Diego History* 40 (Winter-Spring 1994): 1-23.

16. Justice Court, Ballena Township, *People v. Pablo, et al.* (August 1877), San Diego Historical Society. The testimony of Native Americans was allowed by state statute but rarely permitted in practice. See also Ferdinand F. Fernandez, "Except a California Indian: A Study in Legal Discrimination," *Southern California Quarterly* 50 (June 1968): 161-75.
17. A pioneering survey of county archives in California can be found in Owen C. Coy, *Guide to the County Archives of California* (Sacramento: California Historical Survey Commission, 1919). The Work Project Administration (WPA) surveyed county and municipal archives in the late 1930s and published several volumes of its work in *Inventory of County Archives of California*. A concise survey of California records can be found in Laren Metzger, compiler, *Identification of the Historical Records of County Government in California* (Sacramento: California State Archives, 1981). Finally, for local examples of public records see Susan E. Searcy, *For the Record: Catalog of Public Records, City of Sacramento 1849-1982*, Sacramento County, 1848-1982 (Sacramento: Museum and History Division, City of Sacramento, 1982) and Richard W. Crawford, *Guide to the San Diego Historical Society Public Records Collection* (San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1987).

## Moore and Downey, "Black Telephones and Blue Denim," pp. 26-33.

1. "The New Mother Hubbard," *Pacific Telephone Magazine* (May 1909): 20.
2. "Questions Asked 'Information,'" *Pacific Telephone Magazine* (February 1909): 19.
3. *Pacific Telephone Magazine* (October 1929): 8.
4. Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in American Culture* (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1929), 167.
5. Ellen Beers McGowan and Charlotte A. Waite, *Textiles and Clothing* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), 250.
6. *Ibid.*, 234.
7. Levi Strauss & Co. catalog, Fall & Winter 1905/1906.
8. Levi Strauss & Co. price list, February 6, 1922.
9. "The Telephone and the Movies," *Pacific Telephone Magazine* (March 1919): 11.

## Cooper, "The CIO and Hollywood's Labor Wars," pp. 34-39.

1. Foster Rhea Dulles and Melvyn Dubofsky, *Labor in America: A History* (Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, 1984), 288. I would like to acknowledge several dedicated archivists and oral historians in California labor history whose work assisted me: Lynn Bonfield, Tom Connors, Myrna Donahoe, Robert Marshall, Dale Treleven, Mary Tyler, and Eugene Vrana. A special thanks to historian Kenneth Burt, whose pursuit of the history of the CIO in East Los Angeles reminded me how much archivists owe to the researchers who use their collections.
2. Robert H. Zieger, "Toward the History of the CIO: A Bibliographical Report," *Labor History* 26 (Fall 1985): 485-516. Zieger does a masterful job of synthesizing the literature on the CIO to the mid-1980s, including the memoirs of participants, institutional histories, new social history interpretations, and studies of workers' control on the shop floor. Zieger updated his 1985 essay with "The CIO: A Bibliographical Update and Archival Guide," *Labor History* 31 (Fall 1990): 413-40. Also see note 3.
3. One exception is a new book by Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO, 1935-1955* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), which does look at the California CIO, its relationship to the national CIO, and the role of Harry Bridges, longshore leader and head of the CIO on the West Coast. The CIO is also the context, if not the central focus, for recent books on California cannery and farm workers in the 1930s and 1940s. See, for example, Vicki L. Ruiz, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), and Devra Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). See also Luis Leobardo Arroyo, "Chicano Participation in Organized Labor: The CIO in Los Angeles, 1938-1950: An Extended Research Note," *Aztlan* 6 (Summer 1975): 277-303, which examines an ILWU local and a United Furniture Workers' local in Los Angeles. A forthcoming issue of *Labor's Heritage* will include an article by Kenneth C. Burt, "Changing of the Guard: Labor and Latinos in Los Angeles, 1948-1952," addressing the CIO's civil rights and political work in the Los Angeles Mexican American community.
4. James L. Daugherty, "Utility Workers, the UE, and the CIO," interview by Myrna C. Donahoe. Transcript of oral history completed under the auspices of the Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991, 88-89; quoted with permis-

sion of the University Librarian, University of California, Los Angeles.

5. Louis B. Perry and Richard S. Perry, *A History of the Los Angeles Labor Movement 1911-1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 495.
6. *Harbor Unity* [San Pedro] 2 (December 7 1937): 4. Labor Union Collection, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles (hereinafter cited as SCL).
7. *Ibid.*, 4 and 6.
8. *Plane Facts* [Santa Monica] 1 (March 2, 1937): 2. Labor Union Collection, SCL.
9. See Myrna Cherkoss Donahoe, "Workers' Response to Plant Closures: The Cases of Steel and Auto in Southeast Los Angeles, 1935-1986" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Irvine, 1987).
10. *The Picket Line*, October 1945, October 1946-May 1947, in the Hollywood Studio Strike Collection, SCL.
11. *The Picket Line*, October 18, 1946.
12. Dan E. Moldea, *Dark Victory: Ronald Reagan, MCA, and the Mob* (New York: Viking, 1986), 70.
13. Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund, *The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-1960* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 455 (Appendix 6).
14. A major success for the Mobilization was a rally, July 20, 1945, against American fascist Gerald L. K. Smith, which drew eleven thousand people to the Olympic Auditorium and enlisted the support of actors Burgess Meredith and Gregory Peck. See, "Los Angeles Against Gerald L. K. Smith: How a City Organized to Combat Native Fascism" (1945), Pamphlet Collection, SCL.
15. Ceplair and Englund, *Inquisition in Hollywood*, 187-90.
16. Correspondence files, 1945-1946, Mobilization for Democracy Collection, SCL.
17. Robert W. Kenny to "Dear Mr. . . .," 3 September 1946, Mobilization for Democracy Collection, SCL.
18. "Operation Terror," script for "It Is Happening Here," produced by the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, Mobilization for Democracy Collection, SCL.
19. Ceplair and Englund, *Inquisition in Hollywood*, 281.

## Lowell, "Pollution, Production, and Power," pp. 40-46.

1. Gordon Morris Bakken, "American Mining Law and the Environment: The Western Experience," *Western Legal History* 1 (Summer/Fall 1988): 216.
2. *Ibid.*, 216.
3. *Ibid.*, 230-31. A good discussion of judicial decision-making is David C. Frederick, "The Ninth Circuit and Natural Resource Devel-

- opment in the Early Twentieth Century," *Western Legal History* 6, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 1993).
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- Ibid.*
- Ibid.*
- Michael Hough, *Out of Place: Restoring Identity of the Regional Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 32.
- Mary Hill, *California Landscape: Origin and Evolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 225.
1. Frederick Turner, *Rediscovering America: John Muir in His Time and Ours* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1985), 336.
  1. Warren D. Hansen, *San Francisco Water and Power: A History of the Municipal Water Department and Hetch Hetchy System* (City and County of San Francisco, 1985), 20.
  2. Turner, *Rediscovering America*, 339.
  3. Congressman John Raker was also instrumental in the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916.
  4. Hansen, *San Francisco Water and Power*, 26-27.
  5. *Ibid.*, 27, and a copy of The Raker Act from within case R-4173, Civil Cases, California Northern District, Southern Division, Records of the U.S. Attorneys (Record Group 118), NA-PSR, (hereinafter referred to as case R-4173, RG 118).
  6. Michael Smith, *Pacific Visions: California Scientists and the Environment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 3.
  17. Copy of the Raker Act from case R-4173 (RG 118).
  18. House Report No. 41, 63rd Congress, first session, p. 11, included in Summary of Opinion, August 4, 1935, case R-4137 (RG 118).
  19. *Congressional Record*, vol. 51, p. 343, included in Summary of Opinion, August 4, 1935, case R-4137 (RG 118).
  20. *Ibid.*, 4.
  21. Ray Lyman Wilbur served as Herbert Hoover's secretary of the interior from 1928 to 1932. He had graduated with Hoover from Stanford University's pioneer class of 1895. Wilbur served as president of Stanford University from 1916 to 1943, except for his years as interior secretary; from *The Stanford Album*, by Roxanne Nilan (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989).
  22. Summary of Opinion, August 4, 1935, case R-4137 (RG 118).
  23. *Ibid.*
  24. *Ibid.*
  25. Opinion, April 22, 1940, No. 587, October Term, 1939, Supreme Court of the United States included in case R-4173 (RG 118)
  26. Case File SAC 010130, 1908, Unpatented Serialized Land Entries, California State Office, Records of the Bureau of Land Management (Record Group 49) NA-PSR, Greg Lucas, "Local Lawmakers' Ploy Saves S.F. \$30 Million," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 3, 1995), A15.
  27. Sabin Russell, "U.S. OKs Mojave Dump, With Strings," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 1, 1995), A2. John Muir died in 1914, a year after President Wilson signed the Raker Act.
- Chandler, "The Promise of Research and Development," pp. 47-55.**
1. Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American Science: The Military-Industrial-Academic Complex at MIT and Stanford* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 1.
  2. Stuart Leslie and Bruce Hevly, "Steeple building at Stanford," *Proceedings of the IEEE* 73 (July 1985): 1178.
  3. A linac is a type of particle accelerator in which charged particles are accelerated in a straight line by means of radio-frequency electric fields. The SLAC linac is a two-mile-long cylindrical, dislocated, copper waveguide in a tunnel about twenty-five feet underground. *SLAC Speak: A Glossary & Acronym List* (Stanford: SLAC Publications Office, 1994).
  4. The Bevatron was located at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratories and the Alternating Gradient Synchrotron at Brookhaven on Long Island, New York. W.K.H. Panofsky, "An Informal History of SLAC: The Evolution of SLAC and its Program," *SLAC Beam Line* 3 (May 1983): 1.
  5. Edward Ginzton, "An Informal History of SLAC: Early Accelerator Work at Stanford," *SLAC Beam Line* 2 (April 1983): 15.
  6. Elizabeth Paris, "The Building of the Stanford Positron-Electron Asymmetric Ring: How Science Happens" (Unpublished manuscript), 14.
  7. Michael Riordan, *The Hunting of the Quark* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 246.
  8. GeV stands for giga (billion) electron volt, where electron volt is the unit of energy equal to the work done by moving an electron across a potential difference of one volt. It is used to measure a particle's energy or its relativistic mass. *SLAC Speak: A Glossary & Acronym List*.
  9. Riordan, *Hunting of the Quark*, 247.
  10. Letter, W.K.H. Panofsky to Dr. Heitner, September 10, 1969, in SLAC Archives & History Office, Accession 91-014. SPEAR Records.
  11. Interview with Bill Kirk by Elizabeth Paris, 1991. Kirk was assistant to the director at SLAC.
  12. Riordan, *Hunting of the Quark*, 248.
  13. Appraisal: the process of determining the value and thus the disposition of records based on their current administrative, legal, and fiscal use, their evidential and informational or research value, their arrangement, and their relationship to other records. Lewis and Lynn Lady Bellardo, *A Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1992), 2.
  14. R. Nilan, "The Fundamental Nature of Science Archives: Documenting the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center," paper presented at SLAC, 1990.
  15. Elizabeth Fernandez, "A City Responds," in *The AIDS Reader* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 576.
  16. Gerald M. Oppenheimer, "In the Eye of the Storm," in *AIDS and the Burden of History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 270.
  17. *Ibid.*, 268.
  18. Cristine Russell, "Map of AIDS' Deadly March Evolves From Hepatitis Study," *Washington Post* (February 1, 1987).
  19. Jeff Miller, "Surviving Aids," *UCSF Magazine* 15 (February 1994): 20.
  20. Interview with Paul O'Malley by author, June 27, 1995. O'Malley is a disease control administrator, SFDPH.
  21. Dennis Altmann, "Legitimation through Disaster," in *AIDS and the Burdens of History*, 303.
- Dewberry, "Public Records and Genealogy," pp. 56-62.**
1. Declarations of Intention, 1887-1976, and Petitions for Naturalization, 1887-1960, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California (Los Angeles). Records of District Courts of the United States, Record Group 21; National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region.
  2. Because of privacy restrictions, manuscript census records are not opened to the public for research until seventy-two years after compilation.
- Bonfield, "Two Families of Teachers," pp. 63-67.**
1. Ellen K. Rothman, *Hands and Hearts: A History of Courtship in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 170, 175.
  2. Rix Diary, July 29, 1849. Rix Family Papers. California Historical Society, hereinafter CHS.
  3. Chastina noted these letters in Rix Diary July 18, 1852.
  4. This phrase was used by many women tearing the crossing, especially the last section



- when they rode mules. Sandra L. Myres, ed., *Ho for California! Women's Overland Diaries from the Huntington Library* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1980), 3-4.
5. Chastina Walbridge Rix, "Journal of My Journey to California" (1853), Rix Family Papers, CHS.
6. Chastina Walbridge Rix, on board *Ohio*, to "Friends" [Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts and family], Peacham, VT, January 29, 1853, Edward A. Rix Collection, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, hereinafter BL.
7. Rix Diary, entry dated May 1, 1853, but actually written July 10, 1853, on pages kept blank.
8. Chastina Walbridge Rix, San Francisco, to Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts, Peacham, VT, ca. end of January 1855, Edward A. Rix Collection, BL. For a copy of the house drawing, see Lynn A. Bonfield and Mary C. Morrison, *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth-Century Vermont Family*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), 76.
9. Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts, Peacham, VT, to Augusta Gregory, unidentified town, MI, February 18, 1858, Walbridge-Gregory Family Papers, CHS.
10. Albert S. Broussard, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 74.
11. *Ibid.*, 65. Broussard quotes Caen at length.
12. Interview with Josephine Foreman Cole by Jesse J. Warr III, May 8, 1978, pp. 6-7; one of a series of interviews in the project, "Afro-Americans in San Francisco prior to World War II," San Francisco Public Library.
13. *Ibid.*, 11.
14. *Ibid.*, 12.
15. Videotape of talk by Josephine Foreman Cole, March 12, 1988; part of a conference on "California Working Women in the Decade of the Forties," Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University.
16. Interview, May 17, 1978, p. 34.
17. Videotape, March 12, 1988, and interview, May 17, 1978, p. 62.
18. Videotape, March 12, 1988.
19. Broussard, 153-55. See also Richard Grant, "The Case of Audley Cole: Radical Policy in the AFL and CIO," unpublished manuscript, 1993; Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University.
20. Charles Nordhoff, *California for Travelers and Settlers* (Ten Speed Press, reprint edition, 1973), 19.
3. Entry for May 31, 1882, diary of Amy Bridges, HM 48977.
4. *Ibid.*
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6. Raymond & Whitcomb, *Tour Across the Continent and Through the Pacific Northwest May 1 to July 12, 1884* (n.p.: Raymond & Whitcomb, 1884), 5.
7. Jack London to George Brett, June 7, 1905, Jack London Collection, JL 11063.
8. Jack London, "All Gold Canyon," *Moon-Face and Other Stories* (New York: Macmillan, 1906), 149.
9. For a full discussion of London's view of the land, see Earle Labor and Jeanne Campbell Reesman, *Jack London*, Revised Edition (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994), 92-106.
10. Jack London to George Brett, October 7, 1914, in Earle Labor, et al., *The Letters of Jack London* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), 1378.
11. Eliza London Shepard to Jack London, June 3, 1915, Jack London Collection, JL 17894.
12. Jack London to Eliza London Shepard, June 18, 1915, Jack London Collection, JL 13435.
13. Edward Buscombe, ed., *The BFI Companion to the Western* (New York: Da Capo paperback reprint, 1988), 23-24, and Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 234-35.
14. Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 234.
15. Buscombe, *BFI*, 427, Appendix I, table 4.
16. The first quotation is from a letter written by Lake to Dudley Nichols, Fox Film Corporation, June 25, 1933, while the second is from a letter from Lake to Julian Johnson, Twentieth Century-Fox Studios, April 1, 1939, both located in Stuart Lake Collection, Box 8 (83).
17. The quotations are from Lake to A.M. Botsford, Paramount Publix Studios, July 8, 1932, Lake Collection, Box 7 (81), and Lake to Nichols, Fox Film Corporation, Box 8 (83).
18. The quotations are from Lake to Julian Johnson, Twentieth Century-Fox Studios, January 22, 1945, Lake Collection, Box 8 (83); Lake to Henry McRae, Universal Studios, January 12, 1939, Lake Collection, Box 9 (17); Lake to Raymond Crossett, Universal Pictures, March 16, 1949, Lake Collection, Box 9 (17); and Lake to Merritt Hulburd, Paramount Publix Corporation, August 4, 1932, Lake Collection, Box 7 (81).
19. Lake to Sam Marx, Columbia Pictures, May 11, 1938, Lake Collection, Box 6 (9).
20. Dudley Nichols to Lake, June 30, 1933, Lake Collection, Box 12 (56). For a more general discussion of the relationship between writers and the movie industry, see Richard Fine, *Hollywood and the Profession of Authorship, 1928-1940* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1985), especially chapters 3, 4, and 5.
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22. The quotations are from Nichols to Lake, June 30, 1933, Julian Johnson to Lake, November 1, 1933, and Nichols to Lake, October 1, [1933], all located in Lake Collection, Box 12 (56).
23. Lake to Carl Laemmle, Universal Pictures Corporation, December 14, 1931, Lake Collection, Box 9 (17); Lake to A.M. Botsford, July 8, 1932, and Lake to Merritt Hulburd, August 4, 1932, both in Lake Collection, Box 7 (81); and Lake to Kenneth McKenna, MGM Studios, March 28, 1951, Lake Collection, Box 7 (56).
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26. On Behymer's early career, see Starr, *Material Dreams*, 165-66, and Swan, *Music*, Chapter XI, "The Busy 'Bee'."
27. Draft letter from Lynden E. Behymer to Miss Hughes, October 10, 1938, Behymer Collection, Section II.17, "San Francisco Opera" (Box 4).
28. The quotations are from Behymer to Sol Lessor, September 3, 1938, and Behymer to Miss Hughes, October 10, 1938; an example of the letterhead is the draft letter signed by Lynden Behymer and Victor H. Rossetti and tentatively dated September 17, 1938. All items are located in Behymer Collection, Section II.17 (Box 4).
29. This quotation is from the letter signed by Behymer and Rossetti that is cited in note 28.
30. Lynden Behymer to Zoe Akins, August 30, 1938, and Behymer to Joan Crawford, August 31, 1938; Behymer to Fletcher Bowron, September 26, 1938; and Victor H. Rossetti to William J. Kirk, Jr., October 4, 1938. All letters located in Behymer Collection, Section II.17 (Box 4).
31. "For Your Pleasure, as an Opera Patron," an announcement of a lecture by Carleton Smith on October 28, 1938, printed on the stationery of the San Francisco Opera Company, and "L.E. Behymer Talks on Opera SF Engagement 1938," an undated typescript list, both in Behymer Collection, Section II.17 (Box 4).
32. "San Francisco Opera Ticket Holders to October 15" (four-page typescript list), located in Behymer Collection, Section II.17 (Box 4).
33. Draft letter signed by Victor H. Rossetti, L.E. Behymer, and Elmer Wilson, November 15,

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1938, in Behymer Collection, Section II.17 (Box 4).

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Behymer to W.A. Holt, December 23, 1938, and Behymer to Jack Gross, December 24, 1938, in Behymer Collection, Section II.17 (Box 4).

The quotations are from Behymer to W.A. Holt, December 23, 1938; Behymer to Jack Gross, December 24, 1938; and Behymer to Jack Gross, March 10, 1939, respectively. All located in Behymer Collection, Section II.17 (Box 4).

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2. Zita Allen, "Blacks and Ballet," 68.

3. "Sentinel Sponsored Ballet Recital Oct. 19," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, September 25, 1947, p. 20; and "'Ballet Americana' Will Be Presented on Sunday Night," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, October 16, 1947, p. 20, Joseph Rickard Collection, Box 2.

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5. Ronald D. Scofield, "Ballet Review: Negro Dancers Score With Art, Showmanship," *Santa Barbara News-Press*, November 20, 1947, p. B-3, Rickard Collection, Box 2.

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7. "Cinders in Sepia," *London Illustrated News*, July 14, 1951, unpaginated clipping in Rickard Collection, Box 2.

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9. Interview with Kathy Harmon Ho, San Marino, California, August 1994.

10. "Distinctive Performance Given By First Negro Classic Ballet Company," *Redlands Daily Facts* [?], [following August 21, 1951, performance]; and "First All-Negro Classic Ballet Notably Original," *Los Angeles Times*, [following February 4, 1956 performance], undated clippings, Rickard Collection, Box 2.

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4. *Guide to Records in the National Archives—Pacific Southwest Region* (Laguna Niguel, Calif.: National Archives and Records Administration [NARA], 1989); *Guide to Records in the National Archives—Pacific Sierra Region* (San Bruno, Calif.: NARA, 1995); and *Records in the National Archives—Pacific Sierra Region for the Study of Ethnic History* (San Bruno, Calif.: NARA, 1994).

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6. Richard Crawford and Clare V. McKanna, Jr., "Crime in California: Using State and Local Archives for Crime Research," *Pacific Historical Review* LV (May 1986): 284-95.

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8. Maynard J. Geiger, OLM, *Catalogue of Documents to the Santa Barbara Mission* (Santa Barbara: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1947). The unpublished second edition, which includes an index to the De la Guerra papers, is available at the Santa Barbara Mission Archives. See also Francis Weber, "Archival Sources for the History of Religion in California: Part I: Catholic Sources," *Southern California Quarterly* LXXII (Summer 1990): 157-72; William M. Kramer and Norton B. Stern, "Archival Sources for the History of Religion in America. Part II. Jewish Religious Archives and Ethnic History," *Southern California Quarterly* LXXII (Fall 1990): 275-89; Eldon G. Ernst, "Archival Sources for the History of Religion in California: Part III. Protestant Sources," *Southern California Quarterly* LXXII (Winter 1990): 373-91.

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13. Early materials in the Bancroft collection are described in J. N. Bowman, "History of the Provincial Archives of California," *Southern California Quarterly* 64 (Spring 1982): 1-97.

14. Yuji Ichioka, *A Buried Past: An Annotated Bibliography of the Japanese American Research Project Collection* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

15. For a fuller discussion of this subject see Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., and Gloria Ricci Lothrop, eds., *A Guide to the History of California* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989).



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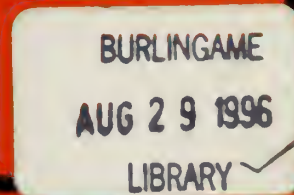
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CALIFORNIA HISTORY  
Summer

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

SUMMER 1996





## Milestones in California History—

### The 1846 Bear Flag Revolt: Early Cultural Conflict in California

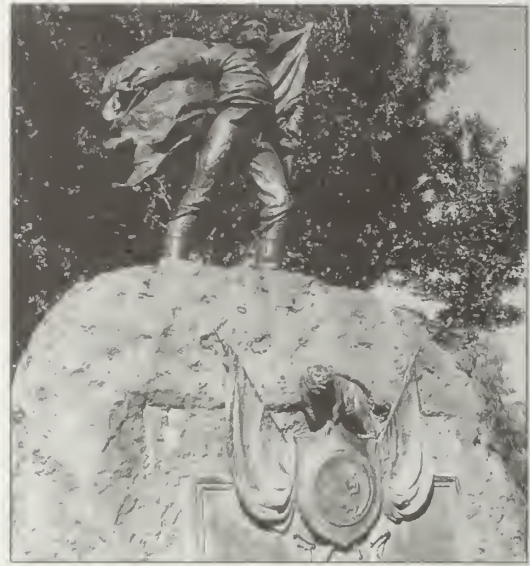
The California experience has been one of constant cultural confrontation. Although the Europeans' conquest of indigenous peoples was not a new story in the New World, the cultural conflicts did not end with the coming of Spanish explorers and missionaries and the destruction of native culture. California has had a constant influx of newcomers who brought new social and cultural traditions to intermix with older, settled groups. As a result, California's population today is one of the most culturally diverse in the world.

One hundred fifty years ago in the little town of Sonoma, north of San Francisco, one of the classic cultural confrontations in California history took place. On June 14, 1846, thirty-four American settlers stormed the home of Colonel Mariano Vallejo, commander of the northern military district in Mexican California, demanding his surrender. These farmers, carpenters, teachers, and mountain men, fearing expulsion from California by Mexican leaders, decided to act first by taking Sonoma and declaring California an independent republic. To their apparent surprise, Colonel Vallejo invited the leaders to join him for a drink and to discuss the terms of his surrender. After a lengthy session that resulted in the inebriation of most of the party's leaders, this brief "revolt," marked by the raising at Sonoma of a homespun banner featuring a bear, succeeded without a single gunshot or drop of blood.

This event, known as the Bear Flag Revolt, marked the beginning of the end of Mexican rule in California. It also illustrated the cultural differences between the Mexican population of California and the incoming American settlers. Seventy years of Spanish and Mexican settlement had resulted in a population made up primarily of californios, people of mixed Spanish/Mexican/Indian descent, born in California, who owned a large percentage of the land as a result of huge Mexican land grants. Although the province was technically governed by Mexico, the californio lifestyle was pastoral and independent, with an economy based on cattle and horses raised for trade with ships from all over the world.

Although Europeans and Americans had trickled into California earlier, by the early 1840s American settlers were arriving in greater numbers and finding conditions culturally and legally unfamiliar, with most of the land already owned but not visibly occupied. At first, the californios helped many of the starving immigrants who crossed the Sierra, but many American settlers began ignoring established land claims, and tension resulted from conflicting cultural philosophies. The Americans' entrepreneurial attitude and disdain for local customs were alien to the californios. The large ranchos, fiesta-filled lifestyles, and mixed racial origins were alien to the Americans.

On the other hand, californios were also generally dissatisfied with Mexican leadership and continual political upheaval.



The Bear Flag Monument, above, erected in the late nineteenth century, stands in Sonoma Plaza at the site of the 1846 skirmish. Courtesy Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau.

Mexican governors came and went. California's physical isolation made it difficult to attract settlers or establish effective colonial control. Annexation by the United States seemed the most logical solution, and some californios, including Vallejo, were ready to welcome the American government, as long as their property and way of life were not threatened.

John C. Frémont, an American military explorer and surveyor leading an expedition sponsored by the United States government, had been ordered to leave California in May 1846 by the comandante general of California, José Castro. Heading north, Frémont stirred up settlers in the Sacramento Valley, which probably instigated the Bear Flag Revolt. After the "revolt," Frémont returned and took command of the settlers. His authority to act was later denied by the United States, and the circumstances of his involvement remain controversial. On July 7, 1846, the American flag was raised at Monterey, and the short-lived California Republic in Sonoma died a quiet death.

The californios failed to mount any substantial military response to the American invasion because of economic and geographical limitations, lack of loyalty to Mexico, and infighting among their leaders. Although the Bear Flag Revolt was an independent action by settlers with no official sanction from the United States government, and was insignificant in relation to later military events in the Mexican War, it illustrated the tense conditions in California that allowed for the easy acquisition of one of the most valuable pieces of real estate in the world.

Mary-Jo Wainwright

Editorial Assistant, California History

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The 100-acre coastal settlement of Summerland was laid out in 1888 on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean and the Santa Barbara Channel Islands and widely advertised as a spiritualist community. Although evidence of oil had been noted there in 1877, with the discovery of natural gas in 1890 and other oil deposits four years later, the town pitched the oil boom and enjoyed a flurry of commercial and industrial development. By the peak production year, 1899, derricks and wharves dotted the beach below town. This 1902 C.C. Pierce collection photograph, previously unpublished, shows a section of the expanding offshore fields. *Courtesy Ventura County Museum of History and Art.*

# FUEL AT LAST

## Oil and Gas for California, 1860s-1940s

by James C. Williams

California suffered a scarcity of traditional energy resources, which stunted the state's manufacturing development throughout most of the nineteenth century. Coal deposits proved scarce and of inferior quality, wood convenient to urban areas was quickly depleted, and water power was confined largely to the Sierra Nevada. During the 1890s, heralding a new energy age, engineers and entrepreneurs tapped hydroelectric power, but it was petroleum that liberated California from its energy-resource bottleneck.

Kerosene was used to light homes and businesses on the Pacific Coast soon after the opening of Pennsylvania oil fields in the 1860s, and at the same time Californians participated in an ill-fated oil rush. But oil for kerosene soon ceased to be their principal interest. Haunted by expensive fuel prices, they realized almost from the start that petroleum might be their salvation—an abundant domestic fuel resource. This prospect kept entrepreneurs going, drilling at promising sites and searching for methods to burn oil as fuel. They could not have known the extent of California's petroleum potential, for it probably surpassed their grandest dreams of oil flowing from rocks like rivers. But they persisted and finally were rewarded not just with immense quantities of oil but also with natural gas and natural gasoline.

The collapse of the 1860s oil bubble prompted some Californians, like John Hittell, to doubt that the state would ever produce much oil. Yet the demand for kerosene, plus experiments with oil as steam fuel, provided thrilling possibilities. In mid-1867, just as many westerners realized that Pacific Ocean trade

would be facilitated by a steam fuel requiring less ship storage space than coal, the U.S. naval gunboat *Palos* completed a successful oil-burning trial in Boston Harbor. California oil and steamship companies responded excitedly. In April 1868, the California Steam Navigation Company burned oil in a seven-mile trial with the ferry *Amelia*, but the effort was sullied by an imperfect oil burner and oil contaminated by dirt.<sup>1</sup>

Had the *Amelia* test been fully successful, oil prospectors knew that California's greatest annual oil production of twelve thousand barrels in 1866 would not have been enough to sustain a market. Nevertheless, the short-term oil-burning failure did not dampen spirits, even though oil prospecting dwindled to minor efforts near San Buenaventura. Hopes for petroleum assumed for many Californians the mythic qualities that so often characterized their optimism over other energy resources. Even as oil activities ceased, in 1868 Titus Fey Cronise wrote of petroleum as fuel in the Pacific steamship trade, predicting that "should the result anticipated from the experiments now being made with this new fuel be ultimately realized, the coast region of California will be rendered quite independent of other sources of fuel supply."<sup>2</sup>

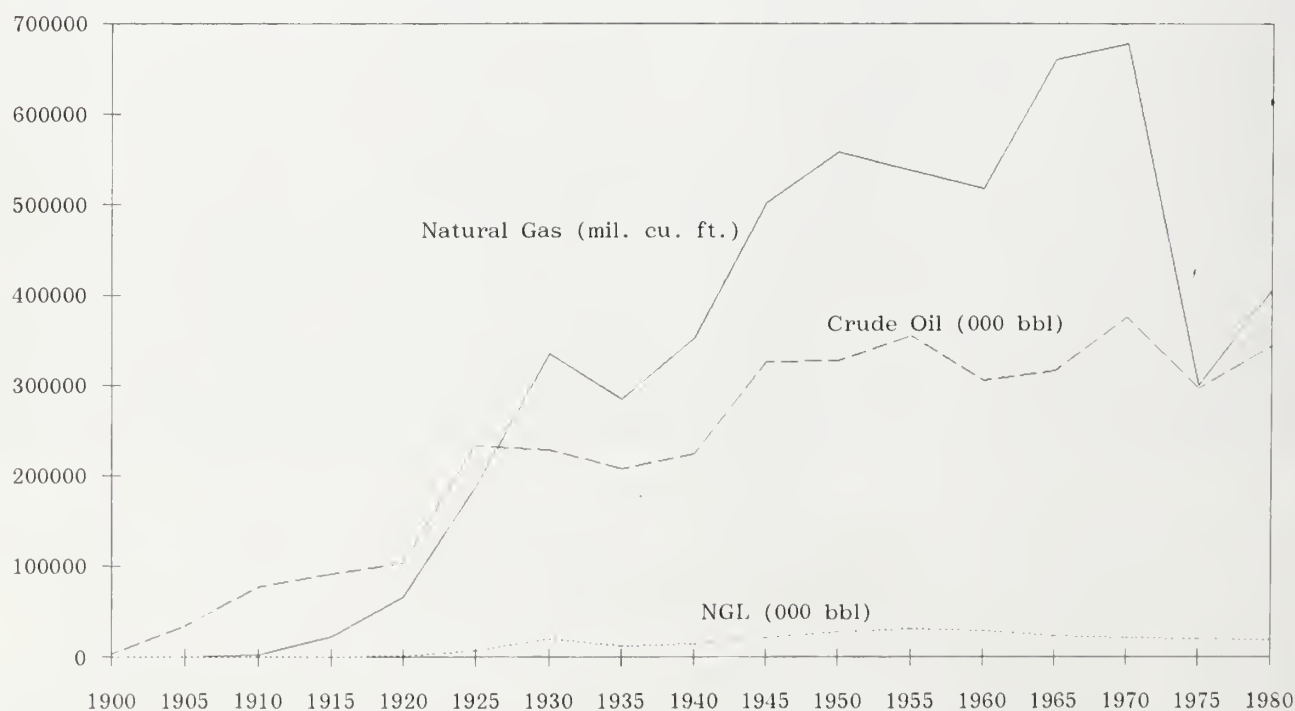
Historian William Hutchinson described California's post-1860s oil industry as "a shirt-tail and starve-out game for some years to come." Production depended largely on fluctuations in eastern kerosene prices. Nationwide economic depression in the late 1870s also hurt the industry. However, the situation seemed to change when San Francisco



entrepreneurs Charles N. Felton and Lloyd Tevis entered the business. They formed the Pacific Coast Oil Company in 1879, bought out some older firms, constructed a refinery across the bay from San Francisco at Alameda, drilled briefly in Santa Clara County, and also began successful drilling in the south-state Pico oil district. Their efforts increased state oil production from 13,543 barrels in 1879 to 128,665 barrels in 1882. Meanwhile, other oil people prepared the state's first pipeline from Santa Paula Canyon to storage tanks near the San Buenaventura wharf. By late 1883, two vessels in San Francisco were being fitted out with iron tanks to carry oil in bulk between the southern coast and the San Francisco Bay area.<sup>3</sup>

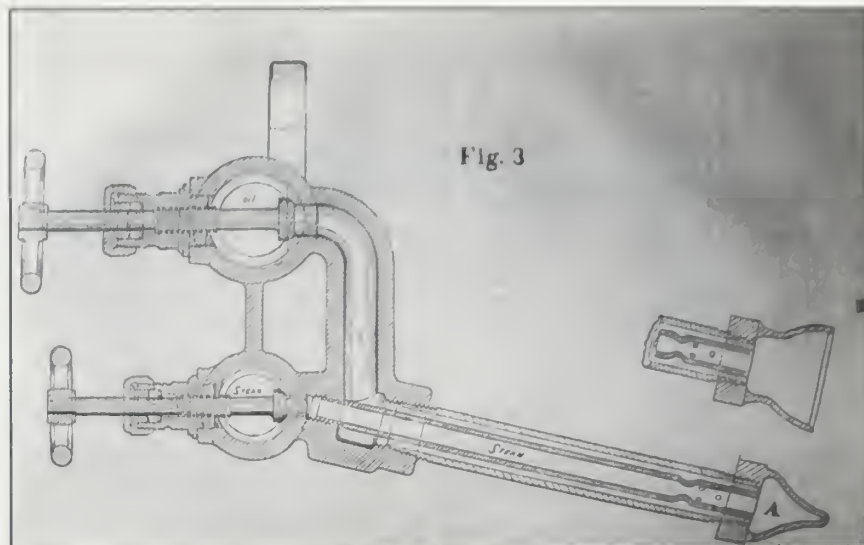
In the early 1880s, plans to ship oil by water to the city, plus new south-state discoveries, enlivened the industry and fueled optimism about the future. *The [Weekly] Price Current* in San Francisco praised the Pacific Coast Oil Company's "energy, perseverance, and pluck" for staying out the hard times and predicted that "the day is not far distant when oil from the oil fields of California will illuminate every home on the Pacific Coast." *Resources of California* predicted that in a few short months "a forest of derricks will stand like sentries on the Santa Ana mountains," and observed in a second article that "the oil trade of California promises to attain gigantic proportions in the course of a few years. . . . We have good rea-

### California Oil, Natural Gas, and Natural Gasoline Production, 1900-1980



Sources: U.S., Bureau of Mines, *Mineral Resources of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1906 to the present); California, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mines, Bulletin No. 156, *Mineral Commodities of California* (San Francisco, August 1950); California, Department of Finance, *Statistical Abstract*, 1970, 13, Table B-5; California, State Mining Bureau, Bulletin No. 69, *Petroleum Industry of California*, by R.P. McLaughlin and C.A. Waring (Sacramento, October 1914); California, Division of Mines, Bulletin No. 122, *California Mineral Production, 1941* (San Francisco, 1942).

The heaviness of California crude oil challenged engineers to develop a method of mixing oil and steam to produce a more fluid product. This 1887 fuel jet diagram illustrates an early design adopted by the Southern Pacific for its *Piedmont* ferry, part of its San Francisco Bay fleet. From the *Seventh Annual Report of the State Mineralogist, 1887*.



son to expect that we will stand at least second in America as an oil producing region, and by consequence second in the world."<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, impediments stood in the way. Because of California petroleum's heavy viscosity, or stickiness, oil people soon found out that only a small percentage of it could be refined easily into kerosene. Crude oil, of course, could be used to make manufactured gas, and petroleum producers found this an attractive market. But their largest trade opportunity rested in oil's use as fuel for steam generation. Although fuel experiments in the 1860s had not proven this potential, difficulties distilling good kerosene, plus the high cost of coal, motivated both oil entrepreneurs and potential fuel-oil users to find an effective oil burner. Early efforts to burn the state's asphaltic oil by mixing it with blasts of air proved ineffective, however. Using not enough air produced incomplete combustion and dense clouds of black smoke. Using enough air, while eliminating the smoke, produced a short flame that, according to a report by California's State Mineralogist, concentrated heat at the boiler's front "to such an extent as to rapidly burn out and destroy the iron."<sup>5</sup>

Experiments with various burners had been carried out in England, France, Russia, and the eastern United States, but California's initial answer to the burner problem was discovered by Ventura storekeeper and oil businessman Evan A. Edwards. In 1876, he joined two other oil enthusiasts to revive drilling on known nearby oil lands, and he experimented with oil as fuel at his own small Ventura

refinery. In 1882, not long after moving to Los Angeles to join the Continental Oil and Transport Company, he patented a successful oil burner. It used a jet of steam to atomize the petroleum, introducing a fine spray into the furnace. Unlike mixing oil with air, steam retarded the combustion, which resulted in a steady, long, smokeless flame that did not concentrate on one spot under the boiler. Edwards, who later joined Union Oil's fuel-oil staff, turned over distribution of his burner to Sutherland Hutton and former Congressman H. H. Markham. They formed the Los Angeles Oil Burning and Supply Company in 1885 and built up a trade with foundries, brick kilns, and other steam-users in the south-state.<sup>6</sup>

Although Edwards's was the first successful burner, others were put into use by the mid-1890s. A. J. Stevens, master mechanic at the Southern Pacific Railroad's Sacramento shops, experimented with oil as a fuel for locomotives as early as 1879. He continued his development and testing, particularly after seeing plans for a burner devised by Scotsman Thomas Urquhart, who was superintendent of motive power for the Garzi-Tsaritzin Railroad in southeast Russia in the early 1880s. Another railroad master mechanic, W. Booth of the Peruvian Central, made a burner that the Southern California Railroad acquired. They put it to use and improved it during the late 1890s. Still another inventor, speaking before the Technical Society of the Pacific Coast, claimed his steam-type burner provided a six-to-one efficiency over burning coal, but members were





With the Southern Pacific Railroad's terminus in Oakland, its ferry system transported passengers to and from San Francisco. The *El Paso*, docked at the Ferry Building, ca. 1900, was propelled by oil rather than steam. From *Sunset Magazine*, courtesy California History Center Foundation.

skeptical that a burner could provide more than a two-to-one efficiency ratio.<sup>7</sup>

As these early developments suggest, because California railroads consumed more steam fuel than any other western industry, their operating costs attracted them to oil, and they assumed an essential role in proving its effectiveness as fuel. By 1895, the Southern California Railroad, soon to be part of the Santa Fe system, had three engines operating on oil, and the Southern Pacific had put its first into service. Six years later, the Southern Pacific's Los Angeles Division discontinued using coal, and the Sacramento Division adopted oil in 1902. Its Salt Lake Division continued burning coal from company-owned Utah mines until 1912, when it also went to oil. In addition to being cheaper than coal, railroads found oil to be cleaner, more efficient, and easier to load into tenders. By 1900, oil provided good service at half the cost of coal, and the railroads became the state's principal petroleum guzzlers (see Table 1). To ensure continued cheap oil supplies, both the South-

ern Pacific and Santa Fe went into the oil-production business during the late 1890s and expanded their holdings in the early 1900s.<sup>8</sup>

In the maritime industry, the Southern Pacific Railroad's San Francisco Bay commuter ferries pioneered the use of oil fuel. Between 1885 and 1887, the company carried out a series of tests on several ferries, achieving an average 20-percent or more cost savings over coal. A tragedy in 1888, however, raised serious questions about oil as fuel. The double-end ferry *Julia* had been converted to oil for seven months. On the morning of February 28, 1888, while steaming near Vallejo, she exploded and caught fire, losing twenty-eight lives. The coroner's jury concluded that fuel oil played a contributing role in the disaster and recommended it be banned on passenger vessels. Captain H. S. Lubbock, U.S. Department of Treasury's supervising inspector for steam vessels, held hearings and concluded that the "prime cause of the destruction... was the explosion of petroleum gas within the furnaces," despite evidence that

the boiler was the fault. On his recommendation, the secretary of the treasury banned the use of fuel oil on all American vessels.<sup>9</sup>

Also dampening the market for fuel oil, the year before the disaster, fire had destroyed the warehouses of three San Francisco kerosene merchants, and another fire had struck the Fulton Iron Works. All were blamed on oil, and, in late 1887, the Pacific Insurance Union urged the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to pass an ordinance curbing the use of fuel oil. The board refused, but in the wake of the *Julia* tragedy and subsequent Treasury Department action, it did pass a law raising the burning test for fuel oil from eighty to ninety degrees Fahrenheit. Although the law did not stop the use of fuel oil, the petroleum industry and local fuel consumers felt threatened. They railed unsuccessfully for its repeal, while Union Oil's Thomas Bard got Congressman William Vandever to introduce successful national legislation permitting fuel oil on nonpassenger vessels.<sup>10</sup>

By the end of 1888, the storm over the *Julia* had subsided, but steamer fuel-oil adoption proceeded slowly. Through the next decade, uncertain oil supplies slowed adoption, as did persistent insecurity about safety. Treasury Department inspectors insisted ships equipped to burn oil have strengthened hulls and fuel storage areas as a precaution against volatile and explosive oil gases. By 1904, the industry—except the Navy, which continued to have concerns about oil on warships—had dealt with safety problems and accepted oil's benefits over coal. One hundred and thirty-seven coastal and inland vessels had converted, and bunkers held fuel oil in Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Port Harford, near Santa Maria in northern Santa Barbara County. Since burners using steam atomization required additional supplies of fresh water, at first only coastal vessels, tugs, ferries, and river steamers converted. But newer, improved air atomization burners, which utilized steam-powered air compressors or rotary blowers, soon made it feasible to equip ocean ships

TABLE 1  
Estimated Use of Fuel Oil in California for the Year Ending May 31, 1919

Class of use	Average per month (barrels)	Total for year (barrels)	Percent of total excluding steamships
RAILWAYS . . . . .	954,400	11,453,000	39.66
GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPAL . . . . .	101,869	1,222,000	4.23
PUBLIC UTILITIES . . . . .	459,726	5,517,000	19.10
HEATING . . . . .	118,950	1,427,000	4.94
AGRICULTURE . . . . .	9,485	114,000	.40
INDUSTRIAL . . . . .	664,534	7,974,000	27.62
MISCELLANEOUS . . . . .	97,357	1,168,000	4.05
Total, exclusive of ships . . . . .	2,406,321	28,875,000	100.00
Steamships . . . . .	346,724	4,161,000	—
Grand Total . . . . .	2,753,045	33,037,000	—

Source: U.S. Geological Survey, Water Supply Paper No. 493, *Hydroelectric Power Systems in California and Their Extensions into Oregon and Nevada*, by Frederick Hall Fowler (Washington, D.C., 1923), Table 182, 870.





The McKittrick field in Kern County helped to transform the southern San Joaquin Valley region into a major North American oil-producing region. *From Sunset Magazine, 1908.*

with fuel oil. By 1915, Pacific-based merchant ships generally burned oil, the Navy was converting, and the opening of the Panama Canal began to stimulate oil's use in the Atlantic.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond rail and maritime transportation, oil finally meant cheap and efficient fuel for industry. With the introduction of Edwards's burner, petroleum companies sought industrial users. They convinced a variety of customers to try oil; the California Sugar Refinery, Standard Soap Company, San Diego Rapid Transit Company, and the Del Coronado Hotel all tested it in the late 1880s. Within a few years a Los Angeles iron mill, a brick and terra cotta company, an electric railway, and several other firms had adopted fuel oil, but among its biggest early indus-

trial users were agricultural processing plants. The Chino Valley Beet Sugar Company, Watsonville's Western Beet Sugar Company, and the Union Sugar Company refineries near Santa Maria all became heavy oil consumers in the 1890s. The Chino refinery alone used thirty thousand barrels in 1893, and the Western plant contracted for sixteen thousand barrels the following year. Opened in 1899, the Union refinery began with some thirty thousand barrels a year, and according to a 1900 oil promotional booklet, two of these refineries used approximately one hundred thousand barrels each during their four-month season.<sup>12</sup>

Despite growing markets for fuel oil, the 1895 opening of the Los Angeles oil field temporarily glutted the fuel market and prices fell. Nevertheless, J. A. Graves recalled, people at first "were loath to change from coal to oil, as none of them knew how long the oil being produced in the city would last and there were no storage facilities." But the field kept producing, entrepreneurs built storage facilities, and an enduring and growing demand for the product developed. By 1900, new fields at Coalinga, Sunset, McKittrick, Kern River, Fullerton, Brea-Olinda, and off-shore at Summerland seemed to assure a bountiful, steady oil supply; wells went in at twice the national rate and successful ones produced at a rate exceeding the national average by 20 percent. As a result, the state's annual per-capita consumption of coal collapsed to less than one-half ton compared to the nation's 5.3 tons, at the same time as Californians burned 80 percent of their oil for fuel, much more than the national proportion. But the industry experienced rocky development. Proliferating new fields continued to cause production to outstrip demand, although a wave of well-capping in 1904 and again in 1912 eased the situation. Periods of supply and demand adjustment at the least meant unstable prices, and at the worst, fed fears that oil reserves might not last.<sup>13</sup>

In 1908, the United States Geological Survey estimated California's total oil reserves at 8.5 billion barrels, enough for 113 years at an annual consumption rate of 75 million barrels. A much more optimistic 1911 estimate doubled this, predicting a 230-year supply from a reserve of 17.2 billion barrels. Such estimates probably seemed comforting to the general public, but consumption hardly remained steady.

Between 1900 and 1910, state per-capita oil consumption climbed from three to twenty-eight barrels, compared to one-half to two barrels nationally. By 1920, it had reached 114 million barrels per year, a rate reducing even the optimistic long-term supply estimate to 150 years and causing the sharp increase in gasoline consumption to concern experts. In December, D. M. Folsom, professor at Stanford University's School of Mines, told San Francisco's Commonwealth Club that "so far, we have been fortunate in discovering new fields at critical times," but declining older fields, limited untapped reserves, and the digging of more and more dry wells did not bode well.<sup>14</sup>

The scientific search for oil, however, was just beginning. Companies seriously began employing geologists only during the 1917 to 1919 war years, and seismographic exploration for oil was not widely adopted in the state until the 1930s. Thus, several important new discoveries remained in the future, beyond Folsom's vision, the first coming between 1921 and 1923 in the Los Angeles basin. At the end of the decade, new discoveries also came near Taft, in the Midway-Sunset field, which had been opened shortly after 1900, and several other pools were opened elsewhere in Kern County during the 1930s. The last big single discovery came at Wilmington, near Los Angeles, in 1936. Through these fields, California maintained its fuel independence and became the only self-contained refining region in the nation through the mid-1940s. Only after World War II did the state once again have to import fuel.<sup>15</sup>

Oil companies, like electric-power producers, had to get their fuel to consumers. At first the San Francisco Bay area, the state's most industrialized and populated region, provided the major fuel-oil market. Initially, ships carried oil in barrels from the south coast to the Bay City, but in 1896 Union Oil built the Pacific Coast's first true tanker, *George Loomis*. Soon several tankers carried crude oil in bulk to refineries in Alameda County, and the Southern Pacific Railroad also put tank cars into service. Since transferring oil to tankers cost in money and time, companies soon turned to pipelines. Short lines carried oil from coastal fields to ocean and rail shipping points, but long-distance pipeline service developed with the opening of the Kern River and other inland fields. In 1902, Standard Oil began construction of a 275-mile

TABLE 2

California Oil and Natural Gas Production:  
1880 - 1960

Year	Oil (thousands barrels)	Natural Gas (millions cubic ft.)
1880	41	—
1885	325	—
1890	307	41
1895	1,245	110
1900	4,320	41
1905	34,276	148
1910	77,698	2,765
1915	91,147	21,891
1920	103,337	66,041
1925	232,492	187,789
1930	228,100	334,789
1935	207,832	284,109
1940	223,881	351,950
1945	326,482	502,442
1950	327,607	558,398
1955	354,812	538,178
1960	305,352	517,535
1965	316,428	660,384

Sources: U.S., Bureau of Mines, *Mineral Resources of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1906 to the present); California, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mines, Bulletin No. 156, *Mineral Commodities of California* (San Francisco, August 1950); California, Department of Finance, *Statistical Abstract, 1970* (Sacramento, 1970); California, State Mining Bureau, Bulletin No. 69, *Petroleum Industry of California*, by R.P. McLaughlin and C.A. Waring (Sacramento, October 1914); California, Division of Mines, Bulletin No. 122, *California Mineral Production, 1941* (San Francisco, 1942).





Coaling Station, later renamed Coalinga, in Fresno County, began as a coal mining community about 1888, but prospered after the turn of the century as a result of its oil fields. *Courtesy of the author.*

line from Kern County to its San Francisco Bay area refinery in Richmond, and two years later the Coalinga Oil Transportation Company began a second 110-mile line from Coalinga to Monterey.<sup>16</sup>

Pipeline construction proved more costly than elsewhere in the country and required operational innovations, because much of California's oil was too sticky for easy pumping. Engineers on Standard's Kern-to-Richmond line first tried mixing it with water, but when the emulsion proved even harder to pump, they brought civil engineer Forrest M. Towl from their New York headquarters to investigate the problem. He recommended reducing the oil's viscosity by heating it, which local engineers accepted although it had not been tried on long-distance pipelines. They insulated the eight-inch pipe by wrapping it with an asbestos blanket and burying it three feet underground. At pump houses spaced twenty-eight to thirty miles apart, they installed four boilers and two high-pressure compound pumps from which the exhaust steam fed into a heater that raised the oil temperature to 180 degrees Fahrenheit. Finishing the line in 1903, they began pumping oil on March 19, but because it cooled by the time it had

traveled ten to fifteen miles, it did not reach Richmond until July 18.<sup>17</sup>

Next, Standard unsuccessfully tried to solve the viscosity problem by mixing the oil with hot water. When this too failed, they mixed the Kern River oil with lighter crude from Coalinga, but this only increased the flow from one thousand to three thousand barrels a day. Standard then received approval in early 1904 to add nine new pump stations between the original ten. Although construction cost \$18,800 per mile, \$8,550 more than that of mid-continental lines, the flow increased to twenty thousand barrels daily. Meanwhile, other companies continued to experiment, some using an auxiliary steam line to heat the oil pipe and others cracking crude (reducing it to simpler compounds) before pumping it. The Associated Oil Company built a rifled pipeline to San Francisco into which water was injected to form a film between the oil and the pipe, but when separating the water and oil at the terminus proved difficult, the method was discarded. Most companies finally turned to Standard's additional pump solution, and 2,019 miles of trunk pipelines had been built by 1919.<sup>18</sup>

Pipelines also played an important role in the exploitation of natural gas, which was being discovered both in conjunction with and independently of oil. Natural gas first was used in Fredonia, New York, in 1821, and it was found in connection with oil in Titusville, Pennsylvania, in 1859. Oil operators there saw it as a nuisance, and introduced the industry practice of flaring (burning off) the gas at the well. Nevertheless, by the 1870s natural gas was being used for lighting and heating in parts of Pennsylvania, and by 1884, some one hundred fifty natural gas companies had been chartered in the Midwest. In California, Stockton residents tapped natural gas during the 1860s, and two decades later reports came of other north-state wells and natural gas associated with oil near Santa Barbara and Los Angeles. As late as 1887, however, the state mineralogist showed little optimism:

It is doubtful whether natural gas will be found in our petroleum sections...in quantities approaching anywhere near the amount found in the Eastern States....Under the existing geological conditions, it would seem folly to expect that prospecting for gas, along our petroleum belt, would pay interest on waste of time and money.<sup>19</sup>

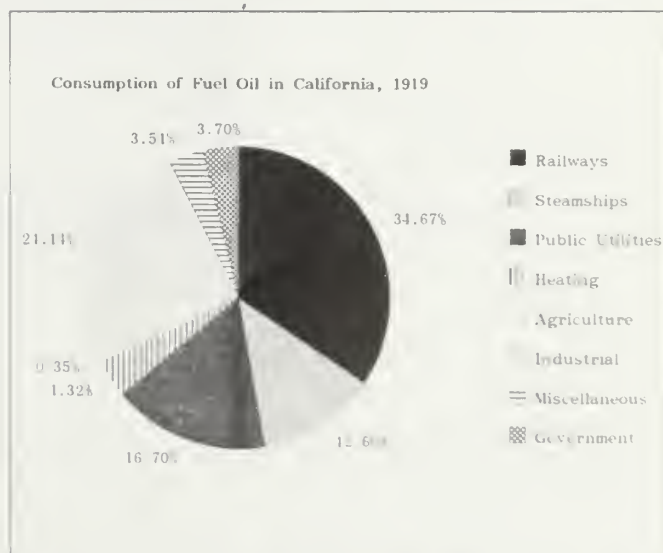
Beyond the Stockton area, few people used natural gas, but elsewhere the manufactured gas industry expanded with long-distance, high-pressure pipeline technology. Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the principal northern California gas manufacturer after 1900, saw a good market for gas in local industrial use and for domestic cooking and heating. This perception, plus a vision of economies of scale and service to suburban communities in the San Francisco Bay area, prompted the firm to become a pioneer in high pressure gas distribution. Its engineers abandoned some common practices developed in the East. To gain greater flexibility, for example, the company substituted lead wool for cement in sealing cast-iron pipe couplings. It also adopted steel pipe and sleeve couplings, installing in 1902 a 16.8-mile, two-inch line that operated under pressures up to 100 p.s.i.<sup>20</sup>

Between 1902 and 1920, PG&E doubled its gas production facilities, more than doubled the mileage of its distribution pipelines, and almost trebled its customers. A thirty-mile, high-pressure extension

from San Francisco's Martin Station south to Palo Alto in 1907 signaled an extensive effort to reach suburban communities from large, central production plants. Since such an effort necessitated improved pipelines, the company adopted oxyacetylene welding for improved steel-pipe joints. PG&E first tried it in 1912 on a one-mile stretch of forty-foot by eight-inch pipe and two years later installed a welded sixteen-inch, high-pressure steel-pipe loop stretching halfway around San Francisco. The project gained some notoriety for supplying gas to the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, the first such exposition to have full gas service.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, other California gas companies sought similar operating economies and expansion through high-pressure service. In 1911, the Southern Counties Gas Company, serving seventeen towns near Los Angeles, adopted high-pressure trunk lines, which permitted retirement of three

#### Consumption of Fuel Oil in California, 1919



Source: U.S., Geological Survey, Water Supply Paper No. 493, *Hydroelectric Power Systems in California and Their Extensions into Oregon and Nevada*, by Frederick Hall Fowler (Washington, D.C., 1923), 870, Table 182.



small production plants. It eventually hoped to have its "entire system served by two plants, operating at each end of the through trunk line, a distance of about seventy-five miles." Farther south, the San Diego Consolidated Gas and Electric Company brought high-pressure service to many of its 344 miles of gas mains, while north of Los Angeles the Central California Gas Company was organized in 1912 to consolidate two smaller San Joaquin Valley companies in order to serve seven communities with high-pressure operations.<sup>22</sup>

California gas companies employed long-distance, high-pressure transmission lines and centralized gas-production facilities, which bore striking similarities to the electric power industry's interconnected production and distribution system. Pacific Gas and Electric led the trend toward centralized manufactured gas production and high-pressure distribution. By 1923, its five northern California sub-regional systems, some with more than one large central gas-manufacturing plant, delivered 12.8 trillion cubic feet of gas to 320,000 customers in several counties and fifty-eight cities. The "Super-Gas Systems of Pacific Gas and Electric Company," said the firm, paralleled the long-distance transmission and interconnection of its electrical system.<sup>23</sup>

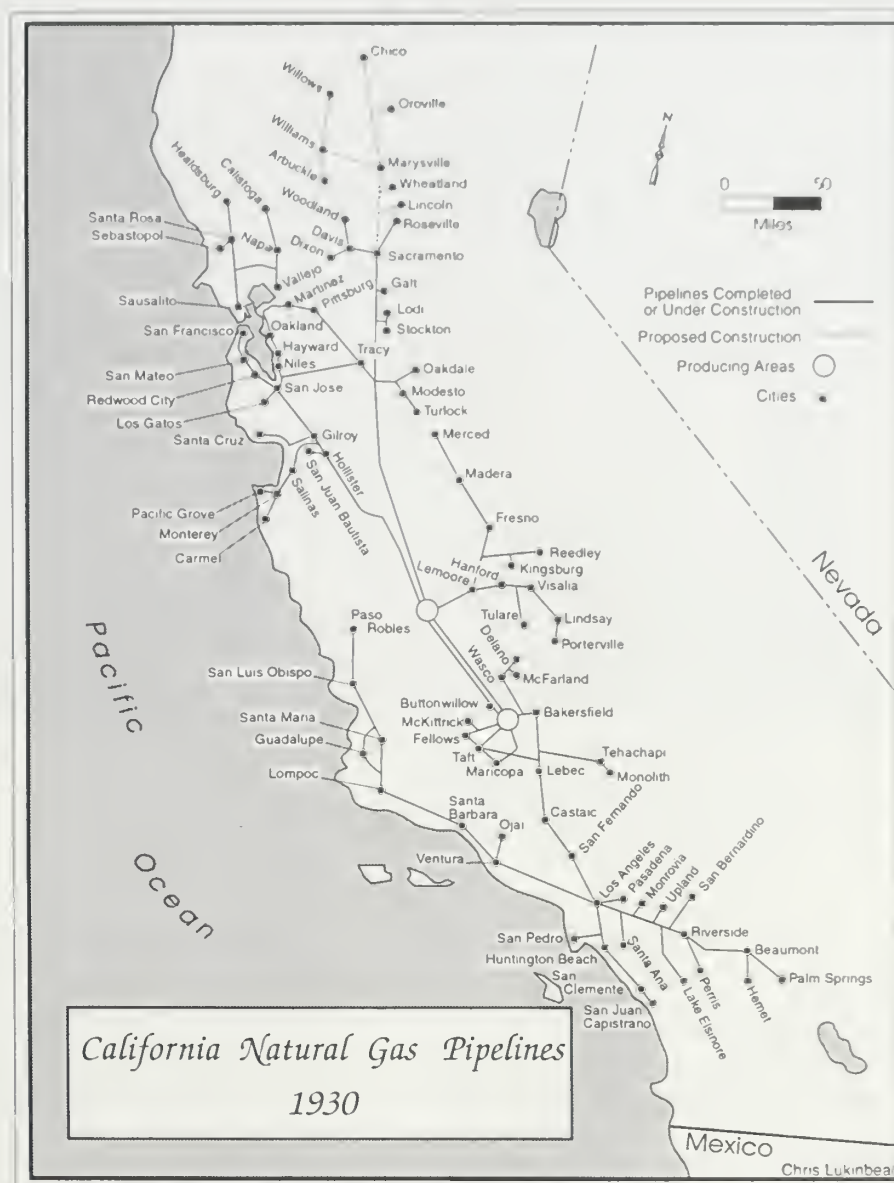
Although flaring natural gas had initially become the practice of Pacific Coast oil producers, pipeline improvements, plus increasing quantities of gas, prompted companies in the early 1900s to start delivering it to consumers. The first large find of oil-related gas to be marketed was discovered near Santa Maria, but other discoveries in Kern County soon overshadowed it. In 1909, Standard Oil tapped a single gas well yielding seven million cubic feet per day, and a second equally productive well led Standard to form the California Natural Gas Company and market it to existing manufactured gas companies. "In the spirit of conservation," Standard's Fredrick H. Hillman later said, "we set about...to market all of the gas...possible...in the hope that through education as to its use we could develop a valuable product." Pipelines reached Bakersfield in 1911, and conservation concerns urged further efforts. State government, following the lead of eastern states that had passed laws as early as the 1890s prohibiting flaring gas, enacted

similar legislation in 1911. Soon the Midway Gas Company began laying a twelve-inch, 112-mile pipeline from the San Joaquin Valley to Los Angeles.<sup>24</sup>

The Midway natural gas field continued to develop, and by the end of 1912, its fifteen wells yielded fifty million cubic feet per day. As this was more than possibly could be sold with current markets and pipelines, oil man Mark Requa, speaking before the Commonwealth Club that December, urged further government regulations for natural gas waste, transportation, and sale. But the waste problem would not be solved until the 1930s, in part because of gas abundance. Shortly after Requa's suggestion, Midway's McNee No. 9 began producing thirty-five million cubic feet per day, and new fields opened in Fullerton, near Los Angeles. Natural gas discoveries came faster than pipelines could be expanded, and just one well, Elk Hills's Hay No. 7, came in in 1919 with an estimated 187 million cubic feet per day. Los Angeles and four score more southern California communities were supplied with natural gas by the 1920s, and fears that natural gas production had peaked and that electricity would soon replace it disappeared with even more discoveries.<sup>25</sup>

When Midway's pipeline opened in 1913, George Low, editor of the *Journal of Electricity, Power and Gas*, observed that "electric power no longer has a monopoly on the claim for long distance transmission at high pressures." The location of natural-gas fields, like hydroelectric sites, required notable transmission developments, and within a decade pipelines spanned the several hundred miles between San Diego and San Francisco. Pacific Gas and Electric's 287-mile gas line from Buttonwillow in Kern County to the San Francisco Bay area and Standard-Pacific's line from Kettleman Hills, in Kings County, to Richmond were the longest in the West. Discoveries of northern natural gas fields near Marysville, in the Sacramento Valley, in 1933 and at Rio Vista in 1936 meant yet more pipelines, and by World War II, the statewide, natural-gas-line network reached from the Mexican border north to Oregon, mirroring the high-tension electric-power grid.<sup>26</sup>

California's natural gas production fulfilled domestic needs until the mid-1940s and also yielded an additional important product, gasoline. Refiners could produce asphalt, road oils, and lubricating oils



Map by Christopher Lukinbeal, Department of Geography, San Diego State University.

from the state's high viscosity crude, but they could not refine good kerosene or gasoline. To help them with this problem, both Union and the Pacific Coast Oil companies had hired chemists in 1892. Pacific Coast's chemist, Walter Price, became acquainted with a second chemist, University of California graduate Eric A. Starke, who worked at a San Francisco gunpowder company. In 1894, Starke developed a "hot-treat" method for refining kerosene, which he turned over to Price. Two years later, he

made another discovery that totally eliminated carbonaceous properties from refined kerosene, and Pacific Coast hired him. Starke's work put Pacific Coast technically ahead of other refiners in refining California oils, and when Standard Oil bought Pacific Coast in 1900, it put Starke's process into commercial practice. But they still could not refine gasoline.<sup>27</sup>

Between 1900 and 1917 the newly introduced automobile caused demand for gasoline to soar.





As middle-class Americans began purchasing automobiles in the early twentieth century, California launched a major highway program. The particularly scenic State Highway 1, shown here ca. 1920, crossed Mill Creek Bridge south of Monterey. *Courtesy California History Center Foundation.*

Standard Oil tried cracking experiments at its Richmond and El Segundo refineries and built new facilities for a process developed by William Burton in Indiana, but efforts by Standard and other refiners did not produce much or very good gasoline. Fortunately, natural gas associated with oil, so-called wet gas, filled the void. Through a compression process first used in West Virginia and Pennsylvania and commercialized by 1910, the industry could produce natural gasoline. Oklahoma soon became the leading producer, and compression plants appeared at California oil and gas fields. Production increased quickly, and Standard's Eric Starke pushed it along by developing a gas trap that separated gasoline from natural gas coming out of high-pressure wells. Two years later state gas operators also adopted a new absorption process for extracting gasoline from "dry" gas.<sup>28</sup>

With early gas production far exceeding pipeline and market capacities, gasoline provided a valuable product. California's natural gasoline became highly prized, for it possessed a high proportion of iso-

octane hydrocarbons, giving it a natural high octane rating for smooth engine performance and superior power. Demand for natural gasoline grew so quickly, however, that it outstripped production. Gasoline refined from crude became of increasing importance, and in the 1920s a process with its roots in California provided a solution for refining the state's asphaltic crude oil. The Universal Oil Products Company introduced a cracking process that it developed from a pipe-still demulsifier invented in 1909 by Jesse Dubbs, a Santa Maria refiner. Improved by his son, Carbon Petroleum Dubbs, it successfully cracked California crude into refined gasoline, a product that became fully acceptable when blended with natural gasoline.<sup>29</sup>

Through the 1920s, California narrowly trailed Oklahoma in natural gasoline production and surpassed it during the following decade. As production increased, its natural-gas industry also followed the national industry in developing and marketing liquefied petroleum gases. Propane, or "bottled gas," which was self-vaporizing above 44 degrees



Foothill Boulevard, San Leandro, California, as it looked in 1908. Not just in California, but all across America, Sunday excursions in the family automobile promoted rapidly increasing dependence on fuel oils and expanded production of domestic reserves. *From Sunset Magazine, 1908.*

Fahrenheit, was introduced as a domestic fuel; butane found service in industry; and pentane was used in rural, central-station manufactured-gas systems. Because of the continuing importance of fuels to the state, a growing number of California companies led the nation during the 1930s and 1940s in marketing liquid petroleum gases. They brought new fuel options to rural residents of the state, to small towns that did not have piped natural-gas service, and to industries.<sup>30</sup>

Production from California's oil and gas fields would be far surpassed by that of other states and foreign nations during the 1930s and later years, but the impact of these domestic resources on California's economic development remained immense. Innovative efforts made oil's use as fuel almost universal on the Pacific Coast, and natural gas and gasoline provided even more freedom from imported fuel. Even the electric-power industry, which relied on steam-turbine generation to supplement hydro-electricity, abandoned coal for oil and gas as fuels. With fuel available at last, Californians achieved energy abundance and independence in the first half of the twentieth century, which was an essential precondition to the state's emergence as a modern manufacturing and agricultural center. CTB

*See notes beginning on page 180.*

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Carleton E. Watkins, *View up Kern River*, most likely from a series of Kern County photographs he completed in 1888. This and others of Watkins's albumen silver prints were introduced as evidence in legal battles over land and water rights. Watkins, who maintained a studio at 427 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, may have produced as many as one thousand images of Kern County, some of which are now at the Huntington Library. Many of these images were intended specifically to promote the Kern County Land Company and California agriculture, and were also exhibited at the 1889 San Francisco Mechanics' Fair. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*

# TURBULENT WATERS

## Navigation and California's Southern Central Valley

*by Andrew Rolle*

In today's California, inland water navigation is mostly confined to the delta of the lower Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. But there was a time when the use of even the most remote reaches of these streams was intensive. An intricate drainage pattern extended from north to south, covering a distance of more than three hundred miles. The Central Valley, encompassing twenty million acres of rich farm land, up to seventy-five miles in width, bordered navigable rivers fed by raging streams that cascaded down from the snowcapped peaks of the Sierra Nevada range.<sup>1</sup>

The long but slighted history of inland navigation once included missionaries, explorers, miners, and ranchers. The streams above the San Joaquin River system were first navigated by Native Americans. These original landlords of California had arrived at least ten thousand years before anyone else. In 1776, when the Spanish trails-priest Francisco Garcés sought a new route to Monterey from northern Mexico, he found native Yokuts camped along the Kern River in dwellings built of willow saplings. On the remote banks and sandbars of this and other mountain-fed streams, Indians had found abundant foods and resources, as well as a cooling refuge from the scorching heat of the great Central Valley.

Alongside the frothing white waters of the Kern, these natives fished and used *tule balsa* boats. Their craft, skillfully lashed together out of bundles of reeds, carried mortars, pestles, baskets of acorns,

dried meat, or animal skins. As many as ten natives could sit astride these fully navigable vessels. In exchange for food, Father Garcés gave the natives tobacco and Indian beads. According to his diary, on May 1, 1776, the Yowlumne "led him downstream" until he could see another village on the north bank of the Kern. According to one account, the natives helped Garcés cross the river, "about one hundred yards upstream...at the Rio Bravo Rancho."<sup>2</sup>

Many stretches of the Kern, the Sierra's longest stream, remained untamed. Fed from the snowmelt of 14,494-foot Mount Whitney, the silvery Kern is a truly wild river. Its channels and sloughs changed their course almost annually.<sup>3</sup> Though its currents were swift, the Indians regularly ferried across the river while fishing for salmon. The local historian and ethnographer Frank Latta (1892-1978) described their flourishing "River Culture" along both the Kern and the Kings, where the natives "were at home beside these broad quiet streams." One of the Yokuts sub-tribes, the same Yowlumne who had befriended Father Garcés, lived upstream on the Kern "as far north as Poso Creek. To the south they ranged to the shore of Kern Lake."<sup>4</sup>

The Yokuts, never far from the roaring sound of rapids, used their floating rafts not only for fishing, but also for hunting waterfowl and gathering seeds and plants used for food preparation. In 1815, Father Narciso Durán of Mission San Jose visited them in the central San Joaquin area. Traveling in a crude,





Map of Tulare Lake, ca. 1870, showing the Kern River drainage area. Tulare Lake, an important navigable waterway until the late nineteenth century, was a catch basin for the many creeks, sloughs, and canals that existed in the lower Kern River Valley. From *Report of the Board of Commissioners on the Irrigation of the San Joaquin, Tulare, and Sacramento Valleys of the State of California* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874). Courtesy Huntington Library.



Although this figure, *The Hunter—Lake Pomo*, by photographer Edward S. Curtis, 1924, is not a Central Valley Indian, the boat style, its tule construction, and its marsh setting are similar to those found among both coastal and interior valley groups. *Courtesy Southwest Museum, Los Angeles.*

small boat, he sought both potential converts and runaway mission neophytes who had fled into the interior marshes and swamps. Until 1846, soldiers from the coastal presidios engaged in retaliatory military expeditions, often utilizing similar craft to round up escaped natives.

With the arrival of American fur trappers, they too crossed the Kern and other rivers of the valley with rafts or sometimes with circular "bull boats" fashioned out of animal hides. They were followed by the government explorer John Charles Frémont, who, during August of 1842, experimented with a smelly, collapsible "India Rubber Boat." Then on his first official expedition, he had used it during his journeys farther east to shoot the rapids of the swollen Platte River and also to navigate Utah's Great Salt Lake. In 1844, during a second expedition to California, his party again crossed the Kern. Frémont's men reached the river on April 13 of that year, tra-

versing it with 130 pack animals and 30 head of cattle. Alexis Godey, one of Frémont's scouts, stated that "in 1844 I crossed on a tule raft."<sup>5</sup>

Indian *tule balsas* were routinely supplied to frontiersmen by the Yokuts, who also acted as middlemen in trading between white parties and their fellow natives. A variety of overland pioneers, following in the wake of government exploring parties, regularly swam or waded their horses across western streams, including the Kern. Some overland covered-wagon parties even dragged along hand tools with which to fashion canoes and rough-hewn river craft out of logs. Whenever possible, travel by water was clearly preferable to walking along rock-strewn or periodically marshy trails.

After the California Gold Rush, enterprising Americans, fanning out inland from San Francisco Bay, established yet another river transport system from west to east. The first paddle-wheeler used on the



Sacramento-San Joaquin rivers appears to have been the *Sitka*. In 1847 it was transported from Alaska in separate pieces aboard a three-masted Russian sailing bark and assembled at Yerba Buena Island. Such river craft delivered flour, fencing wire, and whiskey to remote ranches and mining camps. Steamers and mud scows also returned stacks of produce to San Francisco from interior river ports. Sailing and steam vessels operated far upriver to Stockton and as far south as Fresno Slough. By 1849 the *John A. Sutter* transported grain from Stockton not only to San Francisco but to world markets. Five years later, inland water transportation was flourishing, and several river boat captains consolidated small operations into the California Steam Navigation Company.

Their vessels probed far up the Sierra waterways in order to serve newly established farm and mining centers. If the extent of penetration upland into these rivers seems remarkable, so does the size of some boats used to navigate swift, rock-strewn, snag-filled, seasonal streams. For example, in 1861 Captain John Haggerty operated a 110-foot propeller-driven steamboat, the *Fanny Ann*, up the Mokelumne River. It had been chartered by D. J. Locke, the developer of a settlement on that stream, which he named Lockeford. For \$4,000 he also engaged a double-engine steamboat named the *Pert*, commanded by a Captain Allen, but only "on the condition that she would get to Lockeford." The *Pert* did, indeed, struggle its way to that location on April 5, 1862.

Another settlement on the Mokelumne was Woodbridge, begun by J. H. Wood. The ship *Fanny Ann* first docked there on February 21, 1862. The next year, Locke replaced Captain Allen with Captain A. P. Bradbury; Locke and Bradbury started the Mokelumne River Steam Navigation Company, acquiring two more steamers, the *O.K.* and the *Mary Ellen*. The latter never went beyond Woodbridge. But the *O.K.* provided intermittent service to Lockeford after snags and bars were cleared "for a considerable distance above Georgiana Slough."<sup>6</sup>

Despite its fast current, the Kern River, like the Mokelumne, continued to be crossed by both men and animals. Although less navigable than other Sierra streams, the Kern measured much the same volume of water as the Mokelumne.<sup>7</sup> Both were eventually spanned by ferries and bridges. In 1853 a brief gold rush on the Kern attracted hundreds of fortune seekers. These had to work their way upriver past huge granite boulders which could easily cause a vessel to flounder. In November of 1856, according to a miner named John Barker, he "came around the head of Kern Lake up to Gordon's Ferry...five or six miles...up the river from Bakersfield." After 1858, hunters who also crossed the river in search of elk were ferried over its waters by Indians.<sup>8</sup>

In the 1860s, a second Kern River mining rush attracted settlers who regularly crossed and recrossed that stream by boat in order to supply the new communities of Havilah and Keysville. By 1871, at Tracy's Crossing, a plank boat seventeen feet long and eight feet wide regularly pulled wagons with ropes across the Kern River. In the seventies, the ranchers Solomon and Philo D. Jewett ran sheep and cattle "a dozen miles up the Kern from Bakersfield at Rio Bravo," though it was sometimes next to impossible to use the raging river for transport. The Jewetts also constructed 100-foot-wide canals on their ranches. Their ditches radiated toward the new town of Bakersfield, which required delivery of foodstuffs that the Jewetts provided.<sup>9</sup>

They, however, were minor users of water transport as compared to Henry Miller and Charles Lux, two butchers who in 1859 had arrived in the flat farmlands of the Central Valley from Germany. With little money in their pockets, they ultimately assembled a cattle and grain empire that stretched for fifty miles along both sides of the Kern River and over vast tracts of San Joaquin Valley land. Mexico's earlier land grant system had set the pattern for the possession of huge land holdings by a fortunate few.



*Pioneer Bridge and Wier [sic], by Carleton Watkins, ca. 1881. Miller and Lux spent a good deal of time and money harnessing the extensive waterways that criss-crossed their many Central Valley ranches. The weir was a facility for diverting water, such as from the Kern River, into a canal. Courtesy Huntington Library.*

Ranch records and litigation documents illustrate Miller and Lux's heavy reliance on water transportation in their operations. A possibly apocryphal story involved Henry Miller's legal twisting of the Swamp Land Act of 1850 in order to buy government land for as low as \$1.15 per acre. He allegedly hitched a team of horses to a small wooden boat. By pulling it over enormous tracts of bone-dry and brush-strewn farmland, the resourceful immigrant was able to swear that he had literally navigated by water over the property he claimed as his. It is certain, however, that Miller and Lux livestock were regularly transferred by boat between their remote cattle and farming way-stations. Among these were the Santa Rita Ranch near the Fresno Slough, Dos Palos Farm along the Merced Slough, and Orestimba (sometimes Orris Timbers Creek) near the Stanislaus

River. Dry farming required that cattle and sheep be shifted to pasture land in order to be fattened for market. At Panama Slough, Miller and Lux operated such a thriving farm, located on an isthmus formed by the vortex of two river channels.

Henry Miller could reputedly travel on horseback from southern Oregon to the Mexican border without leaving land that the partners either owned or leased. These cattle barons utilized Spanish and Mexican land grants, as well as federal law, to amass over a million acres, which had to be serviced by water. They also relied on the accepted English common law of riparian rights to create massive irrigation improvements on the flood plains of the lower Kern River. Their vertically integrated agribusiness controlled not only land and water but also river craft, lumber yards, company stores, and even banks.



For almost a century the Miller and Lux interests fought hard to secure and then protect control of scarce water resources for both irrigation and navigation. In a seminal state Supreme Court case, *Lux v. Haggin* (1885), they employed a variety of legalisms (whether based on riparian or appropriative rights) to retain an iron-fisted control of water flowing through their lands.<sup>10</sup>

To manage forty thousand acres of overflowed land along Buena Vista Slough and on the lower Kern, Miller and Lux employed James C. Crocker as their Bakersfield banking agent. He recorded swimming across the river as well as using small boats to cross it "near section 24 in township 29, south 24 east." Crocker and neighboring ranchers all kept boats on the lower reaches of the Kern at Buena Vista Slough, using them to reach sheep, cattle, and hogs that fed along its borders.<sup>11</sup>

After a large flood of 1862, new rivulets of water ran into Buena Vista Lake below today's Bakersfield. Another flood in 1868 diverted water even farther north, creating what became the main channel of the Kern, thereafter called the "New River." In 1881 Elisha Stephens testified that ten years before (in 1871) he had canoed northward out of Buena Vista Lake: "I myself ran up with a canoe to the mouth of New River, and then turned north....It was deep and crooked and not very wide. I went about fifteen miles."<sup>12</sup>

Before that year, and later too, "natural driftwood" and logs regularly floated down the Kern "from [the] mountains to a point well below Rio Bravo Ranch." After several sawmills were established in the Kern River Valley, the floating of logs down the river for commercial purposes was profitably continued by Colonel Thomas Baker, the founder of Bakersfield.<sup>13</sup> As early as 1868, George B. Chester transported loaded wagons across the river at Tracy's Crossing. His Kern River ferry was described as "able to handle heavy freight wagons with the greatest of ease and celerity."<sup>14</sup>

This bustling river traffic is recorded in the thou-

sands of letters and bills of lading housed in the newly opened Miller and Lux Collection at the Huntington Library. These holdings give us a graphic insight into how the Sacramento, San Joaquin, Tuolumne, Mokelumne, and Kern rivers were regularly used both for irrigation and navigation by that firm and other livestock and grain producers. Before the building of railroads into the Central Valley, Miller and Lux's inland ranches required constant shipment of supplies, and their firm shipped such staples as barley, oil meal, and barrels of cheese and nails, as well as fence posts, upriver to Firebaugh Landing, the Columbia Ranch, and their Canal Farm. They paid for this manufactured merchandise with return shipments of cattle and sheep, as well as wheat, hides, and tallow.

By 1873, California's bonanza grain farms were among the nation's leaders in wheat production. Miller and Lux regularly commissioned the steam vessels *Alice Garrat*, *Clara Crow*, *The Relief*, and *Clara Belle* to move grain and supplies to and from San Francisco.<sup>15</sup> Even after the coming of the railroads in the 1860s, rivers continued to be used by ranchers to ship livestock over short distances. Animals driven overland between ranches were more apt to be injured by bruising than when moved by steamers, barges, or rafts. Young heifers, too, were quite easily damaged when shipped unattended on slippery railroad box cars. (Hence "blacksmiths' cinders" were sprinkled on the floor of cars to avoid bruising.)

Long before regular railroad transportation became available in the Central Valley, Miller and Lux built a system of canals to connect remote areas of their many ranches with the natural river system. At Fresno Slough, part of the drainage system from the Kern River to the San Joaquin, river steamers regularly unloaded supplies—such as huge stacks of lumber with which to line miles of irrigation ditches. From there, canal boats transported the cargoes to the Miller-Lux properties.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, supplying outlying ranches by water became a large undertaking. Henry Miller once stated that his company owned

750,000 acres of land in California and another twenty-five to thirty thousand acres in Nevada and Oregon. By 1891, he possessed more than 100,000 head of cattle and 75,000 sheep.<sup>17</sup>

Connected to the once remote Kern River area were two sizable bodies of water—Buena Vista and Kern lakes. Buena Vista Lake alone occupied 36 square miles. Farther north, Tulare Lake caught the snow melt of four Sierra rivers. It also received an inflow from both Kern and Buena Vista lakes, and during some wet seasons discharged it into the San Joaquin River. At one time this made Tulare Lake the largest body of fresh water west of America's Great Lakes.

In a variety of revealing legal documents, the use of boats and canoes on both Tulare Lake and Buena Vista Lake is repeatedly mentioned. This traffic was, however, dependent on the intermittent flow of a water connection between the San Joaquin and Kern rivers. In flood times it was once possible to go by boat from Tracy's Crossing on Buena Vista Slough into Tulare Lake, then down a connecting slough to Summit Lake, through Fish Slough and into the San Joaquin River. After a deluge in 1862, the entire area became one big lagoon. Indeed, in the late 1870s and 1880s a sailing vessel, the *Water Witch*, operated on Tulare Lake, gathering turtles, fish, frogs, and terrapin ducks for shipment to San Francisco's restaurants. Admittedly, reed beds, spongy bogs, bullrushes, and thick tule marshes sometimes clogged one's way, impeding navigation. Later, diking and water diversions for irrigation would destroy the wild wetlands around the bottoms of both Buena Vista and Tulare lakes. These sinks eventually became rich farmlands.<sup>18</sup>

On April 5, 1881, a witness in the case of *Lux v. Haggin* testified regarding the water linkage between the San Joaquin and Kern River valleys. He was asked if it was not correct that there once existed a "continuous sheet of water from Buena Vista Lake to Tulare Lake in times of ordinary freshets?" His reply to this question reads: "There was one body of water

that ran from Buena Vista Lake to Tulare Lake, sometimes with flood waters three or four miles wide."<sup>19</sup>

Navigability on Buena Vista and Tulare lakes was usually not a problem, except in times of drought. In the 1880s, Judge J. J. Atwell regularly operated a steamboat on Tulare Lake. He also reported encountering huge Indian rafts made of tules on that body of water. Some of these craft were fifty feet long. Frank Latta, after interviewing an observer who had been in the area during the 1880s, wrote that his "trip was made in late spring when the flood from the melting snows in the mountains provided enough water in the [Kern] River to float the raft over the sandbars."<sup>20</sup>

As the years passed, a vanishing, often overflowed, landscape gave way to wheat fields, cattle ranges, and canals. By the 1870s, irrigation canal construction greatly increased. However, only limited transport use could be made of canals, most of which were not deep enough for riverboat navigation. In 1871, six miles south of Firebaugh City, Miller and Lux began to build the deeper San Joaquin Canal, 78 miles long, 68 feet wide at its top, and 45 at the bottom. A "side canal" ran for 28 miles. Completed in 1873, this canal system cost \$1,500,000. By 1891, one legal document reads, "We are digging...a compromise canal some 160 miles to Lake Tulare."<sup>21</sup>

Participating in the building of canals was the previously mentioned James C. Crocker, now a partner of Miller and Lux. He and his brother Edward owned a large cattle ranch at Temblor that they supplied by water through Buena Vista and Kern lakes. The Crockers wrote from Bakersfield on February 9, 1874, that they had encountered so much difficulty in clearing tule beds they were "compelled to stop work."<sup>22</sup> Letters to Miller and Lux are filled with details about the shipment of animals and supplies to and from the Kern River region by rafts and punts that had replaced Indian *tule balsas*.

By 1914, Miller and Lux planned an even deeper canal, this one 150 feet wide, extending from Buena





Carleton Watkins, *Headquarters, Buena Vista Farm*. The complex irrigation system in Kern County was produced by channeling the Kern River and by draining swamps and lowlands. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*

Vista Lake to Tulare Lake. Their Kern River Valley "system of ditches" covered "a territory twenty miles wide and forty miles long, beginning at the southern end of the valley where the mesas slope up to Tejon and San Emidio, and extending northwest within twelve or fifteen miles of the north county line."<sup>23</sup>


Protected from high waters by irrigation ditches and thick dikes, small cultivators, among them Asians, Italians, and other ethnic farmers, increasingly occupied a succession of "islands" along the muddy borders of the south Sacramento and northern San Joaquin rivers. On these fertile plots of land they raised corn, cantaloupes, potatoes, and sugar beets. This produce was picked up regularly by river steamers, their stacks belching smoke as they zigzagged between ranch landings. A. P. Giannini, later the founder of the Bank of America, started out buying produce from small farmers along California's inland rivers, then shipping it to San Francisco hotels and restaurants.

But excessive farmland cultivation and over-irrigation severely damaged the Sacramento-San Joaquin drainage system. More handy railroad loading points, as well as unregulated hydraulic mining, which filled in valley riverbeds, also helped to end the golden age of river navigation. Mountains of sand and debris further clogged channels and sluices essential for navigation. As a result, proud wooden vessels were abandoned, ending their days as makeshift bunk houses for ranch hands. With their paint peeling and mildewed, these were frequently beached on muddy stream banks and left there to rot.

The historian is bound to note that, from the 1880s onward, legal briefs concerning California's Central Valley increasingly dealt with railroading and big corporate entities. As the twentieth century approached, the railroads had already changed the economy of the San Joaquin river system. Wheat, cotton, and oil—produced in huge quantities—would henceforth dominate its economic future. Left behind in scattered archives, like the discarded river craft of a bygone age,

are huge stacks of yellowed documents that record violent disputes over the use of California's land and water, whether for navigation or irrigation.

The legal evidence that our forebears left behind helps us to revisit two conflicting legal systems. In California, Hispanic law had originally guaranteed that streams and lakes were for the benefit of all God's children. Water usage by all, not just a few, was crucial—in the name of the Spanish crown. The sharing of waters, for either irrigation or navigation, also became part of Mexico's legal system within and outside the Central Valley.<sup>24</sup>

But, after the American conquest of California in 1846, as we have seen, powerful landowners like Miller and Lux, by helping to shape a new legal system, monopolized key navigation and irrigation rights. Sometimes they did this in collusion with "friendly judges."<sup>25</sup> The subsequent litigation that resulted throws a new light on how the use of water along California's inland waterways came to be forever changed.<sup>26</sup> The agribusinesses of today lay just around the corner, preceding the Central Valley's present economic and political complexities. 

*See notes beginning on page 181.*

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Before the Second World War it was difficult for Chinese American women to get jobs outside Chinatown because of racial and gender discrimination. However, the nation's wartime needs required that every able-bodied person be mobilized, including women and racial minorities. The result was an unprecedented hiring of Chinese American women in the Bay Area's wartime industries. This picture shows Nancy Lew Mar working as a riveter at the Pan-American Airways on Treasure Island. *Nancy Lew Mar Collection.*

# Chinese American Women Defense Workers in World War II

by Xiaojian Zhao

In February 1945, *Fortune Magazine* published an article on the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond, California, including eight photos of the shipyards workers. One of the captions for the photos says, "Chinese Woman: she hasn't missed a day's work in two years."<sup>1</sup> This woman was Ah Yoke Gee, a welder in Kaiser Richmond Shipyard Number Two.\* The weekly magazine of the Kaiser Richmond shipyards, *Fore 'N' Aft*, described her as one of the oldest crew members of Richmond shipyards. From July 31, 1942, when she started to work in the shipyard, to April 20, 1945, Ah Yoke Gee had missed only one day of work to spend time with her oldest son, a serviceman who was passing through San Francisco on his way to the Pacific front.<sup>2</sup> At a time when there was a shortage of labor, Ah Yoke Gee's story was apparently useful for the Kaiser company's public relations. Here, a middle-aged Chinese American woman was being recognized as a patriotic, hard-working defense worker, who was doing her best to contribute to the nation's war effort.

Ironically, this model shipyard worker had been deprived of citizenship by her own government. Born in 1895 on the Monterey Peninsula in California, Ah Yoke Gee was a second-generation Chinese American for whom U. S. citizenship was a

birthright. Her legal status changed, however, after she married a Chinese immigrant from Hong Kong. During the period of Chinese exclusion from 1882 to 1943, Ah Yoke Gee's husband, an alien from China, was racially ineligible for naturalization.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the Cable Act of September 22, 1922, stipulated that women citizens who married aliens ineligible for citizenship could no longer be citizens themselves.<sup>4</sup> Though Ah Yoke Gee worked for the nation's defense industry, she could not vote as a citizen. Her daughters recalled that she had been very upset about losing her citizenship because she always considered herself an American. At age forty-six, she finally had the opportunity to work in a defense industry to demonstrate her patriotism to her country. It was also during the war that Congress repealed the Chinese exclusion laws and made it possible later for Ah Yoke Gee to regain her citizenship through naturalization. Unfortunately, her husband, who died before the war, did not live to see the happy day.<sup>5</sup> Ah Yoke passed away in 1973.

World War II marked a turning point in the lives of Chinese Americans. For the first time, Chinese Americans began to be accepted by the larger American society. Chinese American women not only had a chance to work at jobs traditionally held by men, but were also allowed to show their loyalty to their country. Although scholars have long recognized the importance of World War II in the lives of American women, and there has been increasing popular interest in the topic since the release in the late 1970s of a documentary—"The Life and Times of Rosie the

\*The real names of some of my informants are not given in this essay upon their request. I use the pinyin system in transliterations, except for names of well-known persons. If a person's name has been printed in English sources before, I follow the way it was in print to avoid confusion.



Riveter"—the existing literature has overlooked the profound impact of the war on Chinese American women. Partly because of a scarcity of English-language sources on this topic, some scholars simply have assumed that Chinese American women did not share the experience of "Rosie the Riveter."<sup>6</sup>

Based on sources from Chinese-language newspapers and reports, company documents, and oral history interviews, this essay focuses on the unique experience of Chinese American female defense workers in the San Francisco Bay area. It examines the racial discrimination and prejudice that had forced Chinese Americans to isolate themselves in their ethnic communities, and explores how second-generation Chinese American women, together with men of their communities, grasped the wartime opportunity to enter the larger American society. I chose the San Francisco Bay area as the setting of this study because the area had both the largest concentration of defense industries and the largest concentration of Chinese American women during the war.

The war created a favorable climate for Chinese Americans to be accepted by American society, but looking back, many Chinese Americans have mixed feelings about the war. The bombing of Pearl Harbor was one of the most tragic incidents in the history of the United States. Without it, however, Chinese Americans would not have been able to enter defense industries or the armed services. Since the United States and China were allies against common enemies during the war, American images of Chinese began to change from negative to positive ones. Whereas, once, negative stereotypes of the Chinese had dominated popular culture, the American mass media now described the Chinese as polite, moderate, and hard-working. On December 22, 1941, *Time* magazine, for example, published a short article to help the American public differentiate their Chinese "friends" from the Japanese. The facial expressions of the Chinese, according to the article, were more "placid, kindly, open," while those

of the Japanese were more "positive, dogmatic, arrogant."<sup>7</sup> Also, because World War II was considered by the American public as a "good war" against fascists who had launched a racist war, it was important for the United States itself to improve its domestic race relations. Chinese Americans, too, recognized the racial dimension of this war. "It is fortunate," said an editorial in the *Jinshan shibao* (*Chinese Times*), a San Francisco-based Chinese-language daily newspaper, "that this war has the white race and the yellow race on both sides and therefore will not turn into a war between the two."<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, Chinese Americans were needed for the nation's armed forces and defense industries. In May 1942, Bay Area defense establishments began to advertise jobs in local Chinese newspapers. Richmond shipyards, in particular, announced that they would hire Chinese Americans regardless of their citizenship status or their English skills. In a recruitment speech, Henry Kaiser, president of Kaiser Industries, which operated four shipyards in Richmond, called upon Bay Area Chinese Americans to work in his shipyards to support the war effort. The Moore Dry Dock Company hired Chinese-speaking instructors in their Oakland welding school and started a special bus service between the shipyard and Chinatown for Chinese American trainees.<sup>9</sup>

After decades of isolation imposed by the larger American society, the Bay Area Chinese American communities lost no time in seizing this opportunity. In various meetings and social gatherings, community leaders and organizations urged Chinese American residents to participate in the war efforts. Because military service would qualify immigrants for U.S. citizenship and some Chinese immigrants had been granted citizenship while in the Army, it was considered a breakthrough in challenging the exclusion acts. *Jinshan shibao* published a number of articles regarding the advantages of defense jobs. First, defense jobs were well paid. Second, these jobs could be used for draft deferment. Third, defense employees could apply for government-subsidized

housing, which provided a great opportunity for Chinese Americans to move out of their isolated ethnic ghettos.<sup>10</sup>

Because few companies recorded the number of their Chinese American employees, the existing literature tends either to overlook them or give inaccurate estimates of them. In *The Chinese Experience in America*, Shih-shan Henry Tsai estimated that in 1943, Chinese Americans "made up some 15 percent of the shipyard work force in the San Francisco Bay area."<sup>11</sup> Since in 1943, the Bay Area had about 100,000 shipyard workers, Tsai's estimate suggests that 15,000 were Chinese Americans.<sup>12</sup> However, given the fact that the Bay Area's entire Chinese American population, including all age groups, was only about 22,000 in 1940, and only a small number of Chinese Americans migrated to the West Coast during the war, it was very unlikely that 15,000 of them (over 68 percent) were defense workers.<sup>13</sup> On August 21, 1942, the *Chinese Press*, a San Francisco Chinatown-based English-language newspaper, reported that 1,600 Chinese Americans worked in Bay Area defense industries.<sup>14</sup> This was one year before the peak of the war, before several of the Bay Area's major wartime shipbuilding establishments, including Richmond Shipyard Number Three and Marinship in Sausalito, began production. The number of Chinese American defense workers would increase significantly a few months later, after major defense establishments ran their ads in Chinese community newspapers. Marinship alone, according to *Jinshan shibao*, employed 400 Chinese Americans in March 1943. At the launching ceremony of *Sun Yat-sen*, a Liberty Ship named after the leader of the Chinese Revolution of 1911, Marinship invited all the yard's Chinese American employees and members of their families. The ship was christened by Mrs. Tao-ming Wei, wife of the Chinese ambassador to the U.S., and Madam Chiang Kai-shek was the guest of honor.<sup>15</sup> Based on these scattered pieces of information and interviews with old timers of local Chinese communities, a reasonable estimate is that by 1943, about



Born and schooled in Oakland, Elizabeth Lew Anderson, shown here, worked as a metalsmith at Alameda Naval Air Station during the war. Elizabeth Lew Anderson Collection.

5,000 Chinese Americans were working (or had worked) for defense-related industries in the Bay Area, and between 500 to 600 of them were women.<sup>16</sup>

For a number of reasons, there were fewer female than male Chinese Americans in defense industries. The Chinese population in the United States historically has had an unbalanced sex ratio. Most of the early Chinese immigrants were male, and the Exclusion Act of 1882 also forced male Chinese immigrants who had married women in their native provinces



to leave their wives and children in China. Only registered merchants and their families, students, teachers, diplomats, and travelers could be exempted from the exclusion. In order to bring their wives to the United States, many Chinese laborers were eager to change their status to merchants. Some of them accomplished this by saving a small amount of money and then raising capital through a *hui* to start their own businesses.<sup>17</sup> Others listed their names as partners in businesses of relatives and friends. In exchange for such privileges, they sometimes offered years of free labor. The 1906 earthquake in San Francisco to some extent facilitated the immigration of Chinese. Since birth records of the city were destroyed during the earthquake and fire, many Chinese grasped the opportunity to claim U.S. citizenship and used their new status to send for their sons and daughters.<sup>18</sup> Not until after 1910 did family-oriented life begin gradually to replace the old bachelor society. By 1940, Chinese American citizens finally outnumbered alien residents in Chinese American communities.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, that year there were still 285 Chinese American men for every one hundred Chinese American women.<sup>20</sup>

The precarious economic situation of immigrant Chinese families compelled the majority of Chinese American women to help earn an income, no matter whether they were wives of business owners, wives of laborers, or daughters of immigrants.<sup>21</sup> Women's work in Chinese communities was often integrated with family life and family businesses. In small shops, women worked alongside their husbands, between their households chores. Children of shop-owners often worked from an early age, beginning by folding socks in laundry shops or cleaning vegetables in restaurants and moving on to more difficult tasks as they got older. While women and children did not earn wages, their work was indispensable to the family business since few businesses could afford to hire extra hands.<sup>22</sup>

Women whose families were not wealthy enough to own businesses found employment mostly as

cannery workers, shrimp cleaners, or garment workers. Cleaning shrimp was a common job for women with young children. During the shrimp season, some women would bring shrimp home and sit with their children shelling the shrimp from morning till night, sometimes under candlelight. Wages were based on the weight of the shrimp that they shelled daily. The most common employment for Chinese American women was in the garment industry, which made up 58 percent of all industrial employment in San Francisco's Chinatown in the late 1930s. In the early 1940s, there were more than seventy garment shops, most of which had fewer than fifty employees. At a time when unionized garment workers received \$19 to \$30 a week, workers in Chinatown's garment shops received only \$4 to \$16. A typical garment shop was located at the owner's home, where family members of the shop-owner and employees often worked together.<sup>23</sup>

During the war, in contrast to Chinese American men, who were more likely to be encouraged to join the military or defense work, women's primary duties still consisted of being wives and mothers. Throughout the war years, there were no articles or editorials in Chinese newspapers specifically calling on Chinese women to enter defense industries. "It is the servicemen who will do the fighting for us," Madame C. T. Feng, chairman of the American Women's Voluntary Service (an overseas Chinese organization) told Chinese American women. "We must show our fighting men that we are...absolutely behind them."<sup>24</sup> As part of its war effort, the Chinatown branch YWCA in San Francisco started a special weekly class for women to learn time-saving ways for preparing nutritious food. In a speech delivered to a YWCA open house meeting, the Y's administrator, Jane Kwong Lee, called upon Chinese American women to support the country by giving their families "the right nutritional food."<sup>25</sup> What open support existed for defense employment for women came mostly from the American-educated second generation. As a matter of fact, only the Eng-



After the war, Elizabeth Lew Anderson married a Caucasian merchant seaman. Most of the time she accompanied him when he traveled and worked outside California, but she returned to work at the Naval Air Station during both the Korean and Vietnam wars. This 1983 photograph captures her at work. *Elizabeth Lew Anderson Collection.*

lish-language *Chinese Press* occasionally reported activities of Chinese American women defense workers. In contrast, *Jinshan shibao*, a major local Chinese-language newspaper that had a larger circulation, paid little attention to the subject. On April 16, 1943, Jade Snow Wong, a San Francisco-born young Chinese American woman, christened a Liberty Ship at a Richmond shipyard and made the news in

the *San Francisco Chronicle*, but there was no coverage of the event in *Jinshan shibao*. Not until three days later, after friends and relatives of the Wong family made complaints, did the newspaper print Wong's story and offer a public apology.<sup>26</sup>

It was difficult for many Chinese American women to go outside their communities to work, even when they wanted to. Jobs in ethnic factories were low paying. Nevertheless, the piece-work system and the flexible working hours made it possible for women to combine wage-earning with their family obligations. Before the war, 80 percent of the women who worked in San Francisco's Chinatown were married and 75 percent of them had children. Married garment shop workers could take time off to cook meals, shop, and pick up children from school. Garment shops also allowed women to bring their small children with them to work. It was very common to see babies sleeping in little cribs next to their mothers' sewing machines and toddlers crawling around on the floor.<sup>27</sup> Jobs outside the ethnic community, however, did not allow such practices.

The ethnically exclusive working environment, moreover, provided a place where immigrant Chinese women could socialize. A married Chinese woman with children did not have much time for social life. At work, however, she could chat with friends. Since everyone at work spoke Chinese, women found the working environment agreeable, and intimacy in sharing experiences of life in the United States developed naturally. The relationship between shop-owners and workers, if often economically exploitative, was nonetheless friendly. Family members of the shop-owners often worked side-by-side with the workers. Their children were told to respect the employees, often addressing older workers as "Auntie" or "Uncle." Garment factory jobs, therefore, were in great demand in Chinese American communities. Even the wives of bankers or small merchants sometimes sought employment there.<sup>28</sup>



Thus, although most Chinese American women were compelled to earn money to supplement their family income, they did it while taking care of their husbands and children. Since the exclusion acts made it difficult for Chinese women to immigrate to the United States and those who made it often did so after years of separation from their husbands, it was extremely hard for them to take jobs that conflicted with their household duties. Childcare was one of the major problems. Nursery schools were not available in San Francisco's Chinatown until the early 1940s, and Chinese American women were not accustomed to the idea of leaving their children at childcare facilities. Since very few Chinese immigrated to the United States with their parents, they usually did not have their parents helping out with childcare.<sup>29</sup>

The decades-long isolation had also limited the ability of immigrant Chinese working women to communicate with the outside world. Since they often worked between household chores, they had no time to participate in mainstream cultural activities and little chance to speak English. After years of working at Chinatown jobs, they found the outside world too remote from their daily experience. They did not have any non-Chinese friends and did not know whom to trust outside their ethnic communities. For wives of shop-owners, their departure for outside jobs would harm the family businesses that depended on the free labor of family members. Transportation was also an almost insurmountable problem. Since very few Chinese families had cars at the time (4 percent in the late 1930s in San Francisco), the majority of Chinese immigrant working women were familiar only with the area within walking distance from their homes. To these women, commuting from one city in the Bay Area to another was no different from traveling from one state to another.<sup>30</sup>

Given the social isolation of the immigrant generation, it is not surprising that the Chinese American women who worked in defense industries were

mostly the second-generation daughters of immigrant women.<sup>31</sup> Among the eighty-two Chinese American women about whom I found information in various sources, and the twenty-seven women whom I was able to locate to conduct oral history interviews, only four were over the age of forty at the time they worked.<sup>32</sup> Few of them were married with children. Most of these women had gone to California's public schools; they had at least a high school education, and quite a few of them had attended college. With relatively few household responsibilities, in contrast to their mothers, they had the freedom and independence to work outside the home.

Since most of them were already living in the Bay Area before the war, these younger Chinese American women were among the first American women to join the Bay Area's defense labor force. As early as May 1942, the *Chinese Press* reported that young Chinese American girls were working in most of the defense establishments in the region. At the Engineer Supply Depot, Pier 90, eighteen-year-old Ruth Law was the youngest office staff member in the company. Her co-worker, Anita Lee, was an assistant to the company's chief clerk. Fannie Yee, a high school senior at the time, won top secretarial honors for her efficiency at work at Bethlehem Steel Corporation in San Francisco. She worked with two other young women, Rosalind Woo and Jessie Wong. The major defense employers in San Francisco for Chinese American women at the time, according to the *Press*, were the Army Department and Fort Mason. In Oakland, the Army Supply Base recognized Stella Quan as a very capable clerk. The first two Chinese American women who worked at Moore Dry Dock Company were Maryland Pong and Edna Wong. The State Employment Bureau also had Chinese American women on its staff. Before Kaiser's Richmond shipyards and Marinship began production work, many young Chinese American girls worked at Mare Island Navy Shipyard. Among them were Anita Chew, Mildred Lew, and Evelyn Lee of Oak-



Pearl Wong (second from the right) worked at the Oakland Draft Board during the war. Third from the right is Army Major Farington. *Pearl Wong Collection.*

land. Both Jenny Sui of San Francisco and Betty Choy of Vallejo started as messenger girls in the yard, but they were soon promoted to clerk-typists.<sup>33</sup>

Some women even left their professional training or occupations for defense-related work. Miaolan Ye, an Oakland-born Chinese American girl, was a college student majoring in agriculture at the time. She left school during the war to work as an inspector in a defense establishment in San Leandro.<sup>34</sup> Honolulu-born Betty Lum had been a nurse before the war. She, however, thought "shipbuilding is the present must industry of America" and resigned from her nursing job to learn acetylene burning at a Richmond shipyard. According to *Fore 'N' Aft*, there were three reasons for Betty to support the war effort: she was an American citizen, she was Chinese, and she had a nephew who was killed during the attack on Pearl Harbor. It is unclear when Betty Lum moved to the Bay Area, but the Kaiser company used her voice to urge other Chinese women to participate in defense work. Betty also had two sisters

working in defense industries, one of them at Richmond Shipyard Number Three. Her brother, a dentist at the time, was prepared to join the Army.<sup>35</sup>

Unlike single young women, it was much more difficult for married Chinese American women to take defense jobs unless they did not have small children at home. After she married, Ah Yoke Gee spent most of her time at home taking care of her six children. She kept her sewing machine running whenever she was free from household chores. One of her daughters remembered that sometimes she woke up at two o'clock in the morning and could still hear her mother sewing. By the time the war started, Ah Yoke was widowed. Two of her older children had left home and the rest of them were in either high school or college. Although she still cooked for her family, her children had their own routines and did not expect to be served in a formal way. Every morning before leaving for her swing shift job in the shipyard, Ah Yoke would cook enough food for the whole family for the day. On weekends she shopped, washed, and cleaned.<sup>36</sup>



A few married Chinese American women managed to find defense work alongside their husbands. In late 1942, the Mare Island Navy Shipyard decided to select a Chinese female employee to christen a Liberty Ship. Among the eight Chinese American nominees, two were married. The honor went to Mrs. Yam, a Shop 51 electrician's helper. Mrs. Yam had just graduated from San Jose High School. Her newlywed husband, Fred Yam, was the yard's pipe-fitter. Having joined the shipyard in June 1942, the young couple took the bus to work together from San Francisco's Chinatown to Vallejo. On December 18, 1942, Mrs. Yam, accompanied by six young Chinese American girls, smashed a bottle of champagne at HMS *Foley's* launching ceremony and became the first Chinese American woman in California shipyards to receive this highest wartime honor. She said she felt like "the proudest and happiest girl in the world."<sup>37</sup>

Other married Chinese American women joined defense work while their husbands were away from home. Jane Jeong, a burner at Richmond Shipyard Number Two, started her job in the shipyard only four months after her wedding. Before the war, Jane Jeong had been a dancer and a nightclub manager. She had also accumulated two hundred flying hours and dreamed of being a pilot fighting against the Japanese in China.<sup>38</sup> After the United States officially entered the war, however, she realized that she could support the war effort both in China and in the U.S. by building ships. Since her husband was a merchant seaman who was away from home most of the time, Jane Jeong took a job at a Richmond shipyard.<sup>39</sup>

Coming from a farming community in Fresno, Mannie Lee moved to Richmond along with her husband and children. At a Kaiser shipyard, her husband Henry Lee was a graveyard-shift welder, while Mannie worked with her two daughters, Henrietta Lee and Hilda Fong, and a daughter-in-law, Lena Lee, in the yard's electric shop. In addition to the five shipyard workers of the family, Mannie Lee's two sons and her son-in-law were all in the Army. Although

born in America, it was a big change for Mannie to move from her vegetable farm to Richmond. But at least the family still worked and lived together. The difference was that everyone worked fewer hours and made more money. Moreover, they enjoyed the publicity from the company. Mannie and her family had never received any recognition as hard-working farmers.<sup>40</sup>

Although the majority of the Chinese American defense workers had grown up in the United States, racial discrimination and prejudice before the war had prevented their participation in many areas of American society. Since sons in Chinese American families usually had priority over daughters in receiving family support for higher education, Chinese American girls had to work harder than other students to save money or win scholarships to go to college. And despite the fact that these women were educated in the United States and had a good command of English, Chinese American children in racially integrated public schools in San Francisco were excluded from most of the extracurricular activities. They could not dance with white children and few were invited to parties organized by people other than Chinese. The way they were treated in the job market was even worse: engineering graduates of Chinese descent from the University of California, Berkeley, were frequently rejected by American firms. While white women with college degrees and special training worked as teachers, nurses, secretaries, and social workers, similarly educated Chinese American women could only find service jobs as elevator operators, waitresses, dancers, and maids. Outside Chinese communities their professional degrees were meaningless, for few people wanted their services.<sup>41</sup>

It was the war that opened the door to better-paying jobs for Chinese American women. Aimei Chen, who came to the United States shortly after she was born, had grown up in a small Chinese community in Stockton. Before the war, she had worked as a waitress in a Chinese cafe while attending junior col-

lege. Some Caucasian girls her age got jobs in local dime stores, ice cream parlors, and department stores. Aimei, however, had never applied for those jobs because she knew no Chinese would be hired. While in college taking business classes, Aimei was very pessimistic about her future. As a Chinese American woman, it was unlikely that she could find a job outside Chinatown. Moreover, Stockton's Chinatown was very small and could not provide full-time employment for most of the women in the community. But, shortly after Pearl Harbor, Aimei learned from friends that defense industries were hiring, regardless of the applicants' ethnic backgrounds. She went with a friend to the Stockton Army Depot and was hired on the spot as a secretary.<sup>42</sup>

Yulan Liu, an Oakland-born Chinese American girl, had just graduated from high school in the summer of 1942. Her father, who had come to the United States as a "paper son" in 1915, worked seven days a week in a grocery store in Oakland's Chinatown.<sup>43</sup> Yulan's mother worked in a laundry shop, where her four children spent most of their childhood. Yulan also started to work in a laundry shop at age twelve. She did not have time to play with other children, and she did not recall ever being invited to a Caucasian's house. After she graduated from high school, Yulan began to work full-time. She did not like the laundry shop job, but there were few other alternatives. Most of the girls in Chinatown were waitresses and garment workers. Some of her friends worked as maids in private homes. One day, her brother got a job at Moore Dry Dock Company in Oakland and told Yulan that there were many women shipbuilders there. Yulan went to the yard the next day and got a job as a welder.<sup>44</sup>

Being employed in a defense industry gave some Chinese American women a sense of belonging—of finally being accepted by American society. At Marinship in Sausalito, Jade Snow Wong was happy that she was employed by an "American" company. A San Francisco-born Chinese American girl, Jade Snow was the fifth daughter of a garment shop-owner. She



In the summer of 1942, Jade Snow Wong, above, graduated from Mills College. When she sought advice at the college placement office for her job search, she was told not to expect any opportunities in "American business houses," and to look only for work within her ethnic community. U.S. involvement in World War II, however, provided new employment situations for women of all ethnicities. Hundreds of Chinese American women found work in Bay Area shipyards and defense plants. Among them, Jade Snow Wong worked in a Richmond shipyard. After the war, in 1945, Wong published *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, one of the first books about what it was like growing up as a Chinese American woman. *Jade Snow Wong Collection*



started to work in the shop when she was ten, helping her parents load garments on pick-up days. At eleven, she learned to sew and worked next to her mother. Although living in an ethnic community, she was quite aware of the differences between white Americans and people from her own ethnic group and was eager to venture into the outside world. Because of the financial difficulties of her family and her parents' belief that it was unnecessary for girls to obtain a college education, she could not get family support to go to college as her brother had. With determination, however, Jade Snow studied very hard and finally went to Mills College on a scholarship. In the summer of 1942, she graduated from Mills College. As she stopped at the college placement office seeking advice for her job search, she was told not to expect any opportunities in "American business houses," and to look only for places within her ethnic community. Jade Snow was stunned; an honor student, she felt "as if she had been struck on both cheeks." She was, however, determined to get a job in a non-Chinese company. Her younger sister at the time worked at Marinship in Sausalito. Jade Snow wanted to support the war effort as a citizen, so she went with her sister to Marinship. Twenty-four hours after she submitted an application, she was hired.<sup>45</sup>

Maggie Gee, Ah Yoke Gee's daughter, was born in Berkeley. In a community where Chinese American families were relatively few, Maggie grew up among children from various ethnic backgrounds. As a teenager, Maggie delivered newspapers and helped Caucasian women with their babies and cooking. She thought the people whom she worked for were nice to her. Nevertheless, as a Chinese, she was not allowed to join white students' clubs and she could not swim in community pools. After she graduated from high school, Maggie entered the University of California, Berkeley. She paid the \$28 tuition each semester out of her own earnings and bought books and clothes with her own money. Her mother had supported Maggie's older brother in col-

lege and had no money left for Maggie's education. But Maggie did live and eat at home while in college. Maggie was a good student in school, but she did not know what she could do with a college degree. She heard that many Chinese American male college graduates, let alone Chinese American women, had difficulties finding jobs in the fields in which they had been trained.

Pearl Harbor finally brought Chinese Americans and white Americans together on new common ground. On December 7, 1941, Maggie was spending the afternoon studying in the campus library. She found many students there talking very emotionally. Maggie sensed that something unusual had happened. To Chinese Americans, World War II had begun on September 18, 1931, when the Japanese invaded Manchuria in northeastern China. Maggie had been in the fourth grade at the time. Her mother had planned to send her and her sister to China to study, and they had to cancel the trip after the Japanese occupied Chinese territory. After July 7, 1937, when the Japanese attacked Chinese troops at Lugou Bridge near Beijing, the war against Japan became a nationwide effort in China. Overseas Chinese were actively involved in supporting their fellow countrymen. Maggie often went with her mother to San Francisco's Chinatown to attend rallies and fund-raising activities. She remembered how badly she felt when she learned about the outrageous atrocities during the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, but she was surprised to notice that her American classmates knew very little about what had happened in China. Not until Pearl Harbor did everyone seem involved in the war effort. The Berkeley campus offered classes for defense employment, in which Maggie and many other students received training. While still a full-time student at Berkeley, she got a graveyard-shift job at Richmond Shipyard Number Two.

Wartime employment provided tangible benefits to many Chinese Americans. "For people who used

to have very little money," recalled Aimei Chen, "the war was a time of great economic opportunity." She started to buy things for her family—food, kitchenware, and other household items. Aimei's mother also got a job in a cannery in Stockton, where many former employees had left for defense jobs. Yulan Liu, meanwhile, made \$65 a week, four times more than she had made before the war. She gave some money to her mother and saved the rest for herself. On her day off, she went to the movies and bought herself candies and pastries. As for Ah Yoke Gee, her family endured great difficulties for many years after she lost her husband. During the war, with both her and her daughters working in the shipyard and her son in the service, the living standard of the family improved significantly. Jade Snow Wong, for her part, contributed part of her income to her parents and saved money for her future education.

The ethnically diverse working environment provided an opportunity for women such as Ah Yoke Gee to meet people about whom they had known little before the war. For over forty years, ever since her birth, Ah Yoke had lived in the United States, but as she moved from the Monterey Peninsula to San Francisco and then to Berkeley, she had little contact with people other than Chinese. It was at work that she met all kinds of people and gained respect as one of the oldest crew members of the yard.<sup>46</sup> Yulan Liu was also very popular among her teammates. A small figure weighing only eighty pounds at the time, she not only worked hard but was also the only one of the team who could handle welding jobs in narrow areas of the ships. Her teammates liked to hear her stories about people living in Chinese American communities. Upon their request, she led a tour of the group to San Francisco's Chinatown.<sup>47</sup>

Defense industries provided an opportunity for Chinese women to put to good use their knowledge of the world beyond school. After months of research, Jade Snow Wong produced a paper on the absenteeism of shipyard workers. The paper won

first prize in an essay contest sponsored by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and Bay Area defense industries. In addition to a fifty-dollar war bond, she was offered the privilege of christening a Liberty Ship at a Kaiser shipyard. When her picture appeared in both English and Chinese newspapers, she gained respect from members of her family and from people in the community. Many people in Chinatown came to congratulate her parents for their daughter's success in the "American world."<sup>48</sup>

Although some women were doing traditionally male jobs, compared to what they had done before the war, most of them did not think defense work was that hard. Joy Yee, a San Francisco-born high school graduate, was the second daughter of a garment shop-owner in Oakland. Although Joy had tried to sew with her mother and sisters in the shop, her mother thought that Joy was not good at sewing and that she would never make it as a seamstress. During the war, however, Joy got a job as a mechanic at Alameda Naval Air Station. Excited at having "a real job" in a defense industry, she learned to use different tools and became very efficient at work.<sup>49</sup> Before the war, Yulan Liu had worked ten hours a day, seven days a week, at a laundry. "There was nothing heavier than the iron," she said. "Sometimes my arm was so sore at night that I could not hold my chopsticks." On the other hand, "the welding torch," as she remembered, "was lighter," mainly because she did not have to hold it for hours. Even on an assembly line, she was able to work in different parts of the ships and she always had a chance to chat with people between assignments. In the laundry shop, no matter how fast she worked, there was always more to be washed, ironed, and folded, and she could hardly find any time to rest.<sup>50</sup> The big change for Ah Yoke Gee was that she did not have to sew late at night any more. She worked eight hours a day for most of the days and had Sundays off.<sup>51</sup>

For some women, however, a defense job was not easy. Maggie Gee, for example, found working at night in the shipyard to be tiring. Welding itself was





Maggie Gee worked as a welder at a Richmond shipyard and then as a draftswoman at the Mare Island Navy Shipyard during the war. In 1944, she joined the Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) where she was one of only two Chinese American women. Because Chinese families did not value the education of their daughters as much as they did of their sons, Maggie had to pay her own way through the University of California at Berkeley. After the war she earned a Ph.D., and, continuing her tradition of unprecedented accomplishments among Asian American women in the United States, she worked for many years as the only woman physicist at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. *Maggie Gee Collection.*

not bad, but at night she did not have people around to talk to. It was difficult to stay awake at work, since she was still attending school during the day and could not get much sleep. When the job was slow, she sometimes fell asleep, but it was so cold at night in the shipyard that she could never sleep well. A year later, when she graduated from college, Maggie decided to do something different for a change. She got a new job at Mare Island Navy Shipyard as a draftswoman.

It was the job at Mare Island that led Maggie to the most exciting adventure of her life. Working in a big office with over thirty people, she and two young women, one a Caucasian and one a Filipina, quickly became close friends. At lunch time, the three of them would meet in the rest area adjoining the ladies' room. They would chat, eat their lunches, and drink coffee. They all liked the idea of helping the country fight the war, but at the same time, they all wanted to do something more exciting. The Filipina had taken some flying lessons before the war, and the three of them decided to save money for aviation training. When Maggie finally saved enough money for a training program, she was so overjoyed that she tossed the money into the air. Although as a child Maggie had enjoyed watching airplanes at the Oakland Airport, she had never dreamed of flying an airplane herself. After she graduated from an aviation school in Nevada, she interviewed with the Women's

Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs). When she returned to her drafting job at Mare Island, waiting for a call from the Army, Maggie realized that her life had changed. Everyone—mostly men—in her work area was interested in what she and her friends had done. Some people were envious. A few months later, Maggie was called by the Army and became one of only two Chinese American women in the WASPs. Her mother saw her off at the train station. Ah Yoke Gee was proud of her daughter. She wished that she herself were twenty years younger because she would have liked to fly too. Maggie remained a WASP until the unit was disbanded in late 1944. While in the service, she transported military supplies throughout the country.<sup>52</sup>

Although Chinese Americans were accepted in defense industries, they had little chance to be promoted to supervisory positions. Many companies simply assumed that white employees would not follow orders given by Chinese. For those who had upgraded their skills over the years (usually male workers), this could be very frustrating. One male Chinese American worker at a Richmond shipyard had years of working experience with an excellent performance record. But he, too, saw several less qualified white workers promoted to foreman positions with no chance being given to him. Although he complained, no one listened. Finally he got so angry that he quit his job.<sup>53</sup>

Because women were not expected to work in defense industries after the war, they were not in a position to compete with male employees for supervisory positions. Therefore, unlike the Chinese American men, very few Chinese American women had direct conflict with other workers or their supervisors. Some women recalled that better jobs usually went to Caucasian women. On the other hand, except for the few immigrants who did not speak English,

most of the Chinese American women had at least a high school education, and therefore did not work as janitors.<sup>54</sup> They were mostly employed as office clerks, draftswomen, welders, burners, and in other semi-skilled positions. Since not many defense establishments employed large groups of Chinese American women, it was hard for these women to socialize exclusively among themselves. This, in fact, gave Chinese American women opportunities to meet people from different ethnic backgrounds.<sup>55</sup> Other workers also showed a great deal of curiosity about Chinese American women, for few of them had met Chinese American women before the war. Leong Bo San, a middle-aged Chinese American woman from San Francisco, was described in *Fore 'N' Aft* as "a tiny, doll-like figure" who "walks with the dainty, mincing gait of the upper class Chinese lady whose feet once were bound" in her "flat rubber-soled shoes of the shipyard." According to the report, Leong Bo San had drawn attention from "everyone" who rode "the graveyard ferry boat." At Assembly Line 11, the report went on, Leong Bo San was "everybody's favorite," for she often came to the yard with Chinese shrimp, fruit, and cake to share with other workers. Although she looked tiny and delicate, she worked with "an energy that amazes people twice her size." Her boss, James G. Zeck, reportedly said that "I wish I had a whole crew of people like her."<sup>56</sup>

Nevertheless, some women did find themselves trapped in a place where the future was dismal. For example, Jade Snow Wong's talent and ability were recognized by her boss at Marinship. Every time the boss got promoted to a higher position, he would take her with him to his new office. But Jade Snow noticed that while many clerks, secretaries, and other office workers in Marinship were women, their bosses, those who read the reports prepared by their secretaries and made decisions, were all men.<sup>57</sup> Asked later whether she would like to stay at Marinship when the war ended if she had the choice, she answered "no" without any hesitation. "I decided to leave before they started to lay people off," she said.

"There was no future for me, no future for women in the shipyard." At Mills College, Jade Snow had found a few female role models—her professors, the dean for whom she had worked, and the college president. She wanted to be a professional woman like them. But "in defense industry," she said, "a woman could only be someone's secretary. The bosses were all men." Before the war ended, she started searching for a career in which she did not have to be treated differently because she was a Chinese American and a woman.<sup>58</sup>

Toward the end of the war, defense industries gradually reduced the volume of their production, and their workers were free to leave their jobs. Some Chinese American women had waited for this day to come. Jade Snow Wong was happy that she had done her part to support the war effort of her country, but she quit her job right after V-J day. With the money that she had saved, she started a business of her own in San Francisco's Chinatown and began writing books.<sup>59</sup> Alameda Naval Air Station was one of the few defense establishments in the Bay Area that was able to keep some of its female employees after the war. Some women in the station, nevertheless, decided to leave. Lanfang Wong, a metalsmith in the yard for over three years, quit her job for two reasons. First, she found it tiring to commute two hours a day from San Francisco's Chinatown to Alameda to work. Second, she did not think her job was skilled work. After a while, she realized that it was not much different from making clothes except that metal instead of cloth was used. As soon as she learned that the war was over, she found a new job working for an insurance company in San Francisco. She later married a war veteran and moved with him to Napa Valley to work on a small farm.<sup>60</sup>

Only a few Chinese American women continued to work in defense industries after the war. Yuqin Fu worked as an office clerk at Alameda Naval Air Station until 1947, when she got married. After a few years at home taking care of her children, she found a job at Pacific Telephone and Telegraph.<sup>61</sup> Born and





Holding a bottle of champagne, Jade Snow Wong, shown here in traditional Chinese attire, poses before christening a Liberty Ship at a Richmond shipyard. Next to her is her sister, Jade Precious Stone, a Marinship employee. During World War II both women worked in the Marinship shipyard. *Jade Snow Wong Collection.*

schooled in Oakland, Elizabeth Lew Anderson worked as a metalsmith at the Alameda Naval Air Station during the war. She later married a Caucasian merchant seaman. Although her husband had to move from one place to another all over the country (and sometimes outside the country) and Elizabeth followed him most of the time, she was called back to work by the Naval Air Station during the Korean War (and later again, during the Vietnam War), when her family moved back to the Bay Area.<sup>62</sup> Joy Yee continued to work at the Naval Station until 1955, when she was about to have her first child. But when she stayed at home, she missed her job and her friends at work. In 1968, she went back to work and kept her job for another seventeen years until her retirement. To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the war, Joy Yee helped organize a reunion of Chinese American women who had worked at the Alameda Naval Air Station during the war.<sup>63</sup>

A few others, however, were reluctant to leave their defense jobs. Ah Yoke Gee loved her job in the shipyard so much that she would not leave it for any-

thing else. She knew that other jobs would not pay as well. Aimei Chen also wanted to stay at her defense job. Since so many white women were then also job-hunting, the chances for her to find a good job were slim. By late 1945, however, most of the Bay Area's defense establishments were about to shut down, and large-scale lay-offs began. With limited training and skills, these women could not find jobs in other industries; they had to look for jobs that were traditionally held by women.


These Chinese American women's wartime work nevertheless had important consequences: their lives were no longer restricted within their ethnic communities. Most of them found jobs outside Chinatowns as race relations and the economy improved in the postwar years. Ah Yoke Gee took a job at a post office in Berkeley, where she worked until her retirement. Meanwhile, she became actively involved in Berkeley's Chinese American community.<sup>64</sup> Aimei Chen married and moved with her husband to Berkeley. Under the GI Bill, her husband became an engineering student at the University of California.

Aimei found a job as an office clerk in a small firm, where she worked until her first child was born.<sup>65</sup> Yulan Liu married her former shipyard foreman, a white man. The young couple bought a house in Vallejo, where Yulan's husband worked in the Navy Shipyard at Mare Island. Yulan worked as a nursing aide on and off for over thirty years. Lili Wong, daughter of a San Francisco restaurant waiter, left her job at a Richmond shipyard and went to medical school. She later moved to Washington, D.C., and practiced medicine with her husband.<sup>66</sup>

Their wartime experience gave Chinese American women confidence and maturity. They found that they could do the things that men could. Maggie Gee left the WASPs and went to graduate school in Berkeley. She was not a shy Chinese American girl anymore and was soon elected president of the Chinese Students Association on the Berkeley campus. Thereafter, she became active in local communities. She also decided to become a physicist, although most graduate students in physics were men. She later worked at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and was the only woman physicist there for many years.<sup>67</sup> Jade Snow Wong, however, was no longer eager to work outside her ethnic community. After she left Marinship, she went back to San Francisco's Chinatown looking for her own identity. Her first book was about herself; she wanted the outside world to know what the life of a Chinese American was like, especially a Chinese American woman. It was at that time that she decided to give up her English name "Constance," a name that she had been known by in school and at Marinship. The girl in her autobiography was "Jade Snow," translated originally from her Chinese name.<sup>68</sup>

While acknowledging that World War II brought significant changes to their lives, many Chinese American women noticed that racial discrimination and prejudice did not disappear after the war. They continued in subtle ways. When Maggie Gee and her sister tried to find an apartment in Berkeley in the early 1950s, they knew that some people would not

rent their properties to Chinese Americans. So they told people their ethnic identity when they first inquired over the telephone. At least in one case, a landlady refused to show the sisters the apartment when she learned that they were Chinese.<sup>69</sup> Limin Wong, a defense worker during the war, remembered calling a business firm in Berkeley for an advertised office position after the war. The person who answered the phone at first told her that the job was available. When he realized that she was Chinese, however, he changed his statement and said the position had been filled. Limin later found a job at the State Employment Office. She worked there for thirty years and was the manager of the office before she retired.<sup>70</sup>

The young Chinese American women who participated in defense work had had fresh memories of discriminatory practices in American society before the war, and they were fully aware of the political implications of taking defense jobs. Although very few of them were able to keep their jobs after the war, and some of them might not necessarily have cared about the limited skills that they acquired, what they had accomplished was far more significant than the jobs themselves. They were accepted, for the first time, as Americans, even though most of them were born in the U. S. and had been Americans since birth. To a large extent, the war provided an entry for Chinese American women into the larger American society, something for which their ancestors had struggled a hundred years. 

*See notes beginning on page 182.*

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# A TALE OF TWO HOSPITALS: U.S. Marine Hospital No. 19 and the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital on the Presidio of San Francisco

*by Norman E. Tutorow*

**T**he old Public Health Service Hospital of San Francisco wasn't always old—once it was young, new, in its prime. In those bleak, depression days of the early 1930s, when it was the newest of new “marine” hospitals, people were excited as they strutted through its sparkling halls, admiring on every side the miracles of technology and medical modernity. Nowadays, the no-longer-new institution of healing is known as the “old” Public Health Service Hospital, or “old Marine Hospital,” “old” being an apt qualifier in light of the structure’s antiquity, obsolescence, and decrepitude.

The old Public Health Service (PHS) Hospital has a long history, at least as long as that of the original U.S. Marine Hospital that once stood near it, where Building 1813 now stands, looking out over Mountain Lake, a halcyon body of water—now scarcely more than a city pond—lying in the still-rural Presidio, a vast scenic tract of prime land that itself has passed from military to national park jurisdiction. From the PHS Hospital, the view of Mountain Lake is now obscured by a less-than-beautiful trail of asphalt dubbed Park Presidio Boulevard, squeezed in between the hospital and the lake. The double row of trees that borders this busy artery through the city and the Presidio all but blocks the serene view once enjoyed by people on the front steps of the old Marine Hospital.

The Public Health Service Hospital has had a tumultuous existence on land once claimed, then disclaimed by the Army. Its name has changed as often as the shifting borders of this small enclave. When, in 1981, the U.S. Army again adopted the hospital and its passel of buildings and facilities, it assumed a military, no-nonsense attitude, giving it and its support

structures a decidedly military nomenclature—Area 1800!—prepending “18” as the newest Presidio area, a family name of sorts assigned to the hospital, and all its buildings numbered accordingly, with the main hospital building being given the number 1801.

The 1800 area is the most peripatetic parcel on the Presidio, coming and going, moving in and out and about the jurisdiction of various federal agencies. To understand the history of this unusual plot of federal land, one must first understand the history of the Presidio of San Francisco.

Across its long—more than 200-year—existence, the Presidio Reservation, later renamed the Presidio of San Francisco, has boasted of an area of between 1,500 and 2,000 acres, including tidelands, on the northwestern extremity of the San Francisco Peninsula.<sup>1</sup> It includes some of the most valuable real estate in the world.<sup>2</sup> The history of the Presidio reaches back in time even beyond that of the famous city that borders it on the east and south.

In 1774, the Spanish Viceroy, Antonio María Bucareli, ordered Captain Juan Bautista de Anza to lead an expedition from Tubac, Mexico, to explore the possibility of opening a route from Sonora to Monterey, California. Pleased with Anza’s successful mission, Bucareli promoted him to lieutenant colonel and sent him on a second mission, which led to the founding of the Presidio and Mission of San Francisco. Having reached what is now San Francisco, on March 28, 1776, Anza chose Cantil Blanco (White Cliff), probably near present Fort Winfield Scott, on the soon-to-be-designated Presidio grounds, as his base of operations. The Presidio was formally established on September 17, 1776, and upon Anza’s departure, command was turned over



The newly completed Public Health Service Hospital, and other medical buildings, Presidio of San Francisco, 1932, photographed shortly after demolition of U.S. Marine Hospital No. 19. The Marine Hospital cemetery, now buried under a tennis court, is visible at the left, behind the hospital. The Golden Gate Bridge and Presidio Golf Course, when completed, would appear at the extreme upper left and right, respectively. *Author's collection.*

to Lieutenant José Moraga, who is generally credited with actually having built the 275-foot-square fort. In 1778, its fragile, redwood palisade walls were replaced by adobe.

Mother Nature set about destroying the entire fort by a series of storms and earthquakes, but persistent and undaunted Presidians erected a new fort on the present site of Fort Winfield Scott, calling it Castillo de San Joaquín.<sup>3</sup> It remained under the control of the Spanish until Mexico wrested her independence from Spain in 1822.<sup>4</sup>

On July 7, 1846, in the early stages of the Mexican War, the Presidio was occupied by American Marines. On February 2, 1848, California, and with it the Presidio, was ceded to the United States by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, whose terms officially ended this bloody contest and distributed ter-

ritorial largess beyond imagination to the still-fledgling republic.<sup>5</sup> Bypassing the customary territorial stage, California was admitted to statehood in 1850, when on the ninth day of the ninth month, the Thirty-first Congress made California the thirty-first state.<sup>6</sup>

Following the recommendation of a joint military and naval commission appointed at the close of the Mexican War to designate suitable points for defensive works in the newly acquired territory, on November 6, barely two months into statehood, President Millard Fillmore declared by executive order that the military reservation of the Presidio tract and Fort Point, including Point José, would be reserved from public sale.<sup>7</sup> Another executive order, dated December 31, 1851, issued upon the recommendation of the secretary of war, based on a report



of the Army Chief of Engineers, reduced the size of the Presidio Reservation. Point José, originally part of the reservation, was by the same order included in a separate reservation. In 1853, the old Spanish fortification was razed, and Castillo de San Joaquín and the building of Fort Point were authorized.<sup>8</sup> This replacement fort, built between 1854 and 1861, was patterned after Fort Sumpter.

As San Francisco developed into a great international port, there was an ever-increasing need for health care for ailing mariners. Under the rule of admiralty that a vessel and its owner must provide maintenance and care for seamen injured or falling ill while in service, several marine hospitals had been established following the creation in 1798 of the Marine Hospital Service, which provided for hospitals for sick and injured merchant seamen of all nations landing in American ports.<sup>9</sup>

In 1849, Dr. Peter Smith opened a private hospital in San Francisco at the corner of Clay and Powell streets, which admitted patients of all classes, including seamen. On October 31, 1850, this hospital burned and was not reopened. This event, in part, led to the decision by the federal government to provide medical care to a growing class of indigent patients. On November 16, the adjutant general of the U.S. Army directed Major General Persifor S. Smith, in command of the Military Division of the Pacific, to give a Presidio building "to the [Treasury] department for temporary use as a marine hospital."<sup>10</sup> The secretary of the treasury, on November 22, 1850, advised the collector of customs at San Francisco to take possession of the designated building and to outfit and furnish it for the relief of seamen.<sup>11</sup>

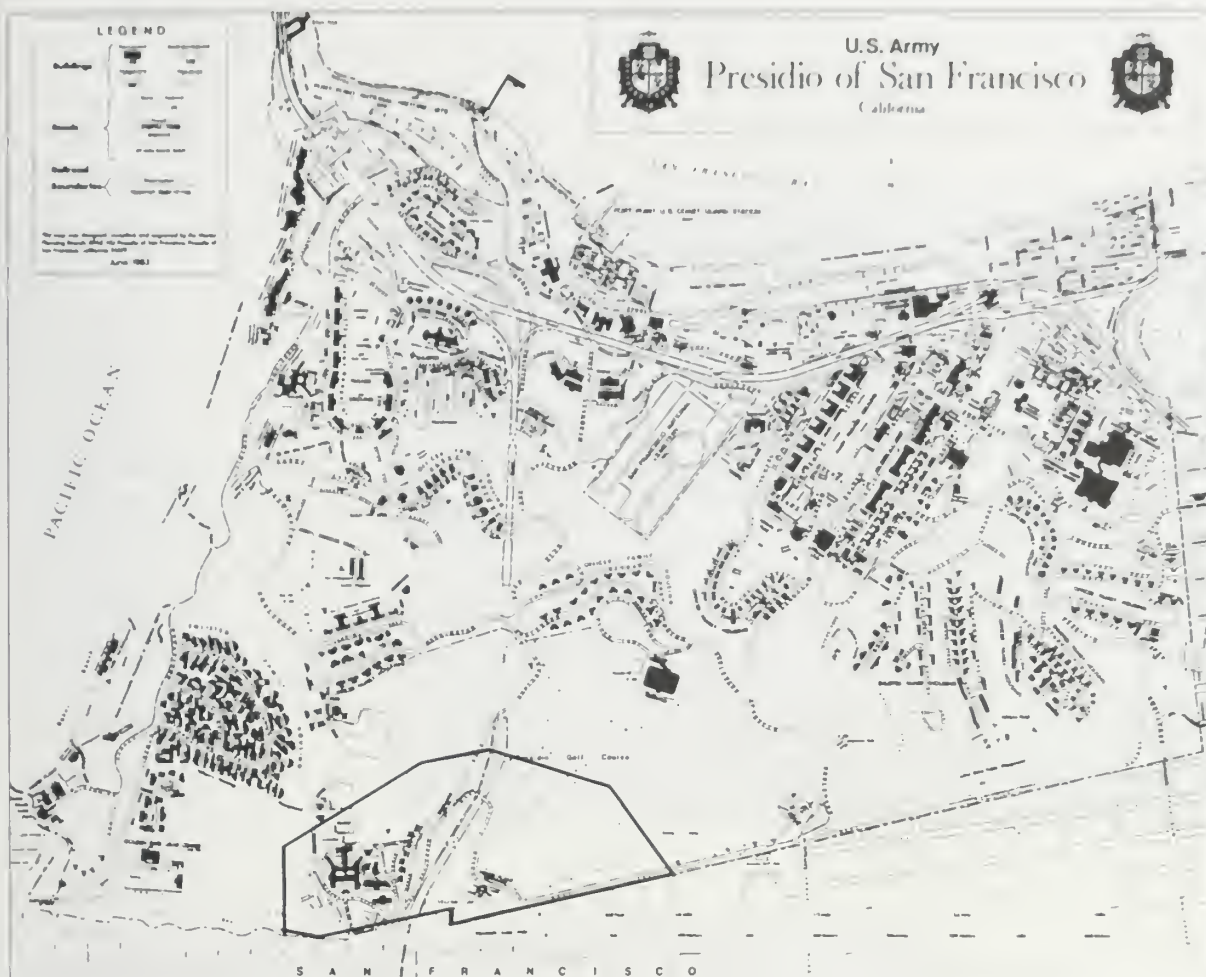
On September 30, 1850, the U. S. Senate approved \$50,000 for a national marine hospital in San Francisco, and on December 10, 1852, a site on Rincon Point, now the corner of Spear and Harrison streets, was conveyed by the city of San Francisco to the federal government for this purpose.<sup>12</sup> The cornerstone was laid on April 7, 1853.<sup>13</sup> The hospital, which was described as large, strongly built, and luxurious, was completed in December, and was opened to maritime patients in early 1854.<sup>14</sup> During the time the hospital was under construction, the revenue cutter *Polk* was anchored near Fort Mason and was used as a floating hospital for the care of sick seamen.<sup>15</sup>

In September 1865, the nearly new Marine Hos-

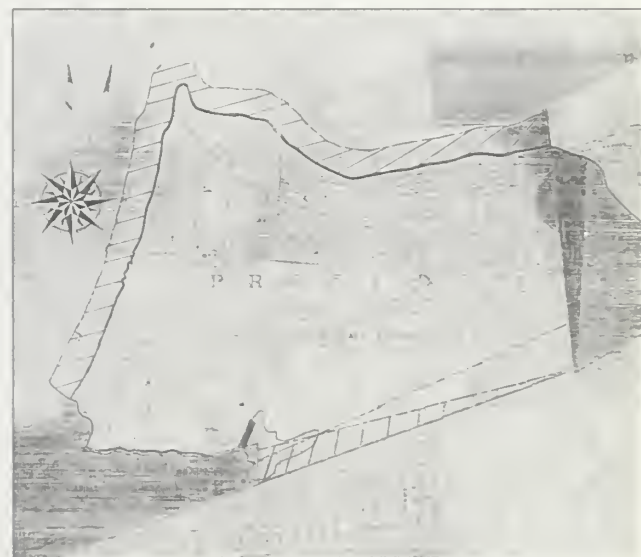
pital was damaged slightly by an earthquake, having one chimney knocked down and some cracking of plaster at one end of the building, but no transfer of patients was required.<sup>16</sup> In 1867, the secretary of the treasury, warning of serious consequences should another earthquake strike, recommended that the building either be strengthened or abandoned.<sup>17</sup> On October 21, 1868, another earthquake did what had been feared. It damaged further the weakened structure. Patients fled the building and were housed temporarily in sheds and with neighbors in adjacent buildings. Some patients were moved to the Alameda Park Asylum. Others were housed for some time at 224 Valencia Street, and later in a building at Fifteenth and Mission.<sup>18</sup> In 1872 and again in 1875, the hospital was reported as being in ruins, and deemed no longer of any use to the Marine Hospital Service.<sup>19</sup> After the abandonment of the building as a marine hospital, it was used as a sailors' home, with a reversionary clause to the federal government should that use ever cease. It was still being used for this purpose in 1896.<sup>20</sup>

Anticipating congressional approval of a new marine hospital in San Francisco, in 1872 the Treasury Department selected Angel Island as a possible site.<sup>21</sup> On January 28, 1873, Congress authorized the construction of a hospital on one of the government reservations in the vicinity of San Francisco, and appropriated an initial \$48,790 for its construction.<sup>22</sup> The law stipulated that the Treasury Department could have Army land for this purpose only if the land were excess to military needs and only with the formal consent of the affected military department. The Army said that it needed Angel Island for harbor defenses, but offered a tract of land on the Presidio.<sup>23</sup> The parcel selected was near Mountain Lake and Lobos Creek.<sup>24</sup> The Treasury Department's supervising architect complained of difficulty in finding a suitable site, but he was sure that the Mountain Lake parcel would be acceptable.<sup>25</sup> The parcel was agreed upon on January 24, 1874, and a lease was negotiated for Treasury Department occupancy of eighty-six acres of land along the southern boundary of the Presidio.<sup>26</sup>

Construction began in the same year, and the new hospital—named the U.S. Marine Hospital—opened its doors in 1875, replacing the damaged facility at the corner of Spear and Harrison. On June 19, 1875,



Top: Map of the Presidio of San Francisco, 1983. The bold area outlined at the lower front depicts the tract set aside by the U.S. Army for the Treasury Department's first Marine Hospital built on the Presidio. Within that area lies the disputed 1.99-acre parcel, discussed in this article, which was finally returned to the Army in 1984, and then transferred with the rest of Presidio lands to the National Park Service in 1994. The lower map shows the original Presidio Reservation boundaries (1850), and the 1870 site designated for the original Marine Hospital, with Mountain Lake in the foreground. *Courtesy Presidio of San Francisco Map Files and author's collection.*



Surgeon General John M. Woolworth invited members of the medical profession to visit the new hospital, constructed for just under \$75,000, an astronomical sum in those days.<sup>27</sup>

The new wood-frame complex sat on a natural terrace overlooking Mountain Lake, and it consisted principally of three ward buildings radiating from a central "horseshoe drive." Each roughly identical building fronted on the drive, and exhibited a long rectangular plan terminating at the rear in a small

V-shape extension. Support buildings, much smaller in size, were constructed on either side of these wards.





This rare 1897 photograph shows the earliest Marine Hospital in San Francisco, built during the Gold Rush at the foot of Rincon Hill, now Spear and Harrison streets. The 1853 building, structurally weakened during earthquakes, was leased to the city in 1876 as a sailors' residence. In the 1920s it was demolished. *Courtesy United States Public Health Service.*

In March and April of 1866, a survey of the Presidio had been made by Deputy Surveyor James T. Stratton, under the direction of the U.S. surveyor general of California.<sup>28</sup> This survey set the total acreage of the Presidio at 1,388.22. The Stratton survey excluded a triangular parcel within the traditional fence line on the southern boundary. During the course of the survey, a party of land speculators—a euphemism for land grabbers or squatters—followed the survey party and threw up a series of shanties along the line with a view to legalizing their claims to almost 120 acres of Army land. Soldiers chased them off. Upon complaint of military authorities that part of the traditional area along the southern boundary of the Presidio had been omitted, the Department of the Interior refused to accept the survey.<sup>29</sup> Under instructions of the surveyor general of the United States, dated August 19, 1881, a new survey of the southern and eastern boundaries of the Presidio was made in August and September 1881 by George F. Allardt, United States deputy surveyor. By this survey, the Presidio acreage was set at 1,465.81, the same as that originally claimed by the military authorities.<sup>30</sup>

One San Francisco editor reported that from time to time squatters and land-jumpers tried to steal the Presidio piece by piece, and even though their actions were illegal, he said, because of the continuing growth of San Francisco, federal government ownership of such a large parcel of land on the outskirts of the city could not much longer be consistent with the common good.<sup>31</sup> Be that as it may, some of these squatters filed claims on the land and the city of San Francisco issued them deeds to the disputed lands and proceeded to collect and pocket permanently property taxes on lands that would later be reclaimed by the federal government. These claims were never recognized by the federal government and were later nullified, largely as a result of the 1883 survey of the Presidio by U.S. Deputy Surveyor Ferdinand von Leicht, which found the Presidio to contain 1,479.94 acres, an increase over previous surveys of roughly fifteen acres.<sup>32</sup>

Embroglios between the Marine Hospital and the Army were, perhaps, inevitable. In 1881, Dr. Ernest E. Hebersmith, head surgeon at the Marine Hospital, wrote his superiors that General Irvin McDowell wanted to include Mountain Lake in a “pleasure

Staff members posed at  
the Marine Hospital,  
1880. *Author's collection.*



Marine Hospital patients,  
ca. 1880. *Author's collection.*







This 1929 aerial view encompasses the grounds of U.S. Marine Hospital No. 19. The new Public Health Service Hospital would soon occupy the empty ground in the upper middle of the photograph. The cemetery is barely visible at the upper right. *Author's collection.*

park," a system of drives and roads around the Presidio Military Reservation and the lake.<sup>33</sup> At first, Hebersmith had offered no opposition to the plan, thinking it would add to the attractiveness of his hospital and would be a pleasure to patients, but he objected strenuously to McDowell's alleged plan to subdivide hospital property in order to carry out his scheme.

McDowell's response to Hebersmith's letter ridiculed the surgeon's fears of the Army's imagined pleasure park or drives around the Presidio. He denied any intention to divide the hospital property, and insisted that Dr. Hebersmith's statements were without a "warrant of truth."<sup>34</sup> McDowell's troops denied having had any communication with the hospital, and, as for himself, he said he had never even been near the institution. He stated further that no military road went within a half mile of the hospital. Later, McDowell also commented on Dr. Hebersmith's ignorance about building roads.<sup>35</sup>

Having the Treasury Department's hospital on War Department lands led to further serious but now comical-sounding disputes. For example, the Army protested that, in violation of the agreement, a hospital fence denied military access to Mountain Lake. According to Major General John Pope, the 1873 act giving the hospital the right to build on Presidio property reserved to the Army exclusive right to the waters of Mountain Lake and guaranteed road access to that body of water.<sup>36</sup> Not surprisingly, the judge advocate general concurred. Dr. John Vansant, custodian of the U.S. Marine Hospital Service, District of the Pacific, did not take Pope's criticism well, and replied that Army allegations were simply untrue. The Treasury Department fence marking the boundary between the Presidio and the U.S. Marine Hospital, Vansant declared, did not deny military personnel access to the lake, and he insisted in no uncertain terms that hospital grounds were not within the jurisdiction of military authorities. He



Standing just behind two wood-frame buildings of the old Marine Hospital, the stately new PHS Hospital nurses' quarters, Building 1808, nears completion, ca. 1932. *Author's collection.*

reminded the commanding general that free access to the lake had always been granted to "law-abiding people," civilian or military, and he warned that any acts of violence by military personnel or civilians would be resisted to the fullest extent and would be reported to Washington.<sup>37</sup> Later correspondence claimed that the fence was erected only in part to define boundaries; it was also needed to keep Army and private stock from wandering through hospital grounds, causing annoyance to hospital officials and damage to property.<sup>38</sup>

For several years the Army had leased land along Lobos Creek to a civilian gardener who provided vegetables for Presidio troops. The Army eventually became concerned that the garden had grown from its original eight and a half acres to forty acres and might threaten the Presidio's water supply. The chief surgeon was asked by the Army to terminate all hospital gardening.<sup>39</sup>

Pollution of its drinking water has been a problem from the beginning of Presidio history—even before the hospital was built—to the present time, and the problem became so acute because of the gardening that a board of examiners was appointed to investigate it. "It having been observed that the gardens on Lobos Creek, which are heavily covered with fresh manure, drain into the springs which supply drinking water to the posts of Fort Point, Presidio,

and Fort Point San José, and to the city of San Francisco," read the order, "a Board of Officers is hereby appointed to examine and report the facts in the case; to what extent the wholesomeness of the water will probably be affected thereby, and will recommend necessary action."<sup>40</sup>

Thus was threatened a form of cattleman-shepherd range war between the Army and the Treasury. When the Marine Hospital rejected an Army request that thirteen acres on the western boundary of the hospital be returned to the Army so that the Army could control the watershed of Lobos Creek, the supervising surgeon of the hospital called this just another ploy of the Army to steal hospital land:

Last year the excuse assigned for making war on the Marine Hospital garden was that it polluted the water. Little was said then about the much lauded garden on the Presidio Reserve....Now the old garden having been abandoned by Department orders long ago, they are still harping on the water question.

The water of Lobos Creek, the very little of it that is near the Hospital Reserve, is not in the slightest, or most distant, danger of contamination by the Hospital....We have no cattle. Our garden adjacent to the little mashy stream was discontinued nearly a year ago. *Lobos Creek in its entire length is outside of the Marine Hospital Reserve.*<sup>41</sup>



Water shortages did lead to the acquisition of additional land on the Presidio, which had early siphoned its drinking water from Mountain Lake, which later—and unexpectedly—proved to be an exhaustible source. This discovery led Presidio overseers of potable water to augment their water supply by purchases from the Spring Valley Water Company. In 1915 the Presidio acquired title to 3.58 acres from the water company, including riparian rights along its south border and west of Mountain Lake. Later, acquisition of two acres from various owners, including the Spring Valley Water Company, completed the parcel known as the Lobos Creek area, which since that time has provided the Presidio with its supply of potable water.

A new cause of alarm completely overshadowed the relatively minor and comic-opera squabbles between the Army and the Marine Hospital when, in 1899, the bubonic plague was detected in Honolulu. Marine Hospital Service officers at the San Francisco Quarantine Station were alerted to examine ships arriving from the Orient to make sure that the disease would not find a foothold in the United States. The first documented case of bubonic plague in North America was discovered on March 6, 1900, when the body of a Chinese man killed by the dreaded scourge was found in the basement of the Globe Hotel, in San Francisco's Chinatown.<sup>42</sup> The San Francisco Board of Health quarantined the entire twelve-block Chinatown district by cordoning off the region where the carriers were suspected and posting a police guard to contain possible carriers of the malady.<sup>43</sup> Fumigation and sterilization of buildings and facilities and of outgoing ships were among the first measures taken. From March until June 1900, control work was carried on by the Marine Hospital, including the fumigation of ships leaving the city and train inspections at border points.

Federal authorities at the Marine Hospital joined state and local officials in inspecting, isolating, and disinfecting 14,117 rooms in 1,180 houses. By the time the hospital made its annual report for the year 1900, there had been a total of eighteen fatalities recorded.<sup>44</sup> Fifty cases of the bubonic plague occurred between March 6, 1900, and the writing of the Surgeon General's 1901 report.<sup>45</sup>

Local health authorities began a house-to-house inspection within Chinatown, placed guards at every

exit from the city that Chinese were accustomed to using, and ordered a disinfection of sewers and houses.<sup>46</sup> This action led to one of San Francisco's most incredible outpourings of verbal vitriol, amounting to a campaign of denial, vilification, and abuse. In response to the above measures, the Chinese community fought the disclosure of the plague. The controversy that ensued concerning the actual existence of the disease—what one writer described as one of the "most scandalous episodes in the history of American public health"—ultimately involved medical experts at the Marine Hospital, doctors at the quarantine station on Angel Island, members of the city Board of Health, editors, mayors, the state governor, and the secretary of the treasury, in short, "everyone from the President of the United States to the individual resident in San Francisco."<sup>47</sup>

On March 22, 1900, the president of the San Francisco Board of Health published in the local papers a summary of the situation, in which he declared Chinatown infected by the bubonic plague.<sup>48</sup> Dr. James M. Cassaway, director of the Marine Hospital, was directed by the Public Health Service to make suggestions to the Board of Health on various curatives then in use.<sup>49</sup>

On April 26, another case of the plague was reported, and still others in May, resulting by May 20 in a total of nine deaths. On May 15, Dr. Joseph J. Kinyoun, a specialist trained in bacteriology, and then medical officer in charge of the quarantine station at Angel Island, reported that, since there was no traceable connection between the known cases, an epidemic existed.<sup>50</sup> Most San Francisco newspapers denied that any genuine case of the plague had been discovered.<sup>51</sup> With the exception of the *Examiner* they reacted violently to the thought that the bubonic plague could exist in California. Editors did their best to discredit the Board of Health and Dr. Kinyoun.<sup>52</sup> When Dr. Wilfred H. Kellogg, while engaged by the city Health Department of San Francisco in 1900, made the first diagnosis of bubonic plague, it was said that "his action required moral courage as well as sound scientific training."<sup>53</sup> Some people took satisfaction in the knowledge that, so far, at any rate, the disease existed only among Chinatown "Mongolians," who were believed to be more susceptible to the disease than were others.<sup>54</sup>

On May 22, President William McKinley allowed Surgeon General Walter Wyman to restrict the travel

of all Orientals on common carriers.<sup>55</sup> The Chinese refused to accept this, and filed for a restraining order. On May 28, 1900, Judge William W. Morrow of the United States Circuit Court called the quarantine racially oriented and said that President McKinley's order was a form of class legislation and was therefore unconstitutional.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, he ruled, only the San Francisco Board of Supervisors had the authority to cordon off Chinatown. Consequently, the cordon was abandoned.<sup>57</sup>

When the State Board of Health sought Governor Henry Gage's help in cordoning off the infected area, he refused. Gage then conducted his own investigation, and concluded that the plague "did not nor ever did exist in California."<sup>58</sup> He pressured the State Board of Health to change its official position on the existence of plague in San Francisco.<sup>59</sup> His next step in the cover-up was to speak disparagingly in his 1901 message to the state legislature of the "plague scare in San Francisco" and to condemn Dr. Kinyoun for assisting city officials in throwing a shadow over the city by their reckless acts.<sup>60</sup>

A special federal commission, consisting of three leading bacteriologists with no previous connection with the government, was appointed to investigate the bubonic plague in San Francisco.<sup>61</sup> Tellingly, the commission's official title was "Commission for the Investigation of the Existence or Non-Existence of Plague in San Francisco."<sup>62</sup> These specialists reached San Francisco in the latter part of January 1901, and within a few days witnessed six cases of the plague. Their report was so conclusive that there no longer remained any significant opposition to cleansing Chinatown. But despite the incontrovertible evidence of the existence of the plague in Baghdad by the Bay, a few people continued to deny it, fearful that California products would be placed on embargo lists and that tourists and their greenbacks would stay away.<sup>63</sup>

Despite a state law that called upon public health officials to take all possible measures to detect and prevent the spread of either Asiatic cholera or the bubonic plague, widespread change of attitude by the government and people of California came only when Henry Gage was replaced as governor in 1903 by George C. Pardee, who was a physician, when the State Board of Health had been discredited, and when California had been threatened with universal quarantine.<sup>64</sup> The inauguration of Governor

Pardee went far toward changing the official attitude in Sacramento toward the plague. He accepted the findings of the medical examiners and promised to do whatever the Marine Hospital Service wanted for the preservation of public health.<sup>65</sup>

By February 1904, there had been 119 cases of the plague in San Francisco, with 113 deaths, and the disease appeared to have gained a long-term foothold in the city. Panic over the possibility of an epidemic recurred in 1906, following the great earthquake and fire. In the following year, the plague laboratory was reestablished in the center of San Francisco.<sup>66</sup> A fatal case of the plague was reported in San Francisco on May 24, 1907, when a sailor was diagnosed at the Marine Hospital as having the disease. Other cases were discovered on August 12 and August 14, and another anti-plague campaign was launched at once. This second outbreak lasted six months before being brought under control by the combined efforts of the Marine Hospital and state and local authorities.<sup>67</sup> Between 1907 and June 30, 1908, there were 159 cases of the plague in San Francisco, with seventy-seven fatalities.<sup>68</sup>

Combating the plague was a risky business for medical experts as well as for ordinary victims. A doctor, two nurses, and a morgue attendant contracted the disease in the fall of 1907, and one of the nurses and the morgue attendant died.<sup>69</sup> In addition to isolating and treating human carriers of the bubonic plague, considerable resources were devoted to the destruction of rats, known to be hosts of parasites that could transmit the disease to humans. The city of San Francisco paid more than \$12,000 in 1909 to rat bounty hunters at the rate of ten cents per rat brought in dead or alive for examination.<sup>70</sup> The twin precautionary measures of rat-catching and disinfection continued, and as a result of this vigilance, the cases of plague dropped very quickly. On June 30, 1916, the Public Health Service severed its connection with the on-going plague-suppression measures in San Francisco. Thereafter, the San Francisco Department of Health continued routine monitoring on its own.<sup>71</sup> Many later cases were traced to ground squirrels.<sup>72</sup> Outbreaks of the plague in Oakland and Los Angeles confirmed that this was not merely a short-term scare.<sup>73</sup>

In 1902, the Marine Hospital Service became the U.S. Public Health and Marine Hospital Service, and was in 1912 renamed the United States Public





The Public Health Service Hospital, 1953, with its new front-wing extensions, left and center, now dominating the building's original, clean architectural lines. *Author's collection.*

Health Service, still under the Treasury Department. The facilities continued to be known commonly as marine hospitals well into the twentieth century.

The change in name often reflected a change in policy and purpose, and in 1916 federal employees with work-related illnesses and injuries were placed under the care of the Public Health Service. The following year, PHS hospitals nationwide were opened to military servicemen and patients suffering from leprosy. In 1918, the Public Health Service assigned to its hospitals the care of veterans, uniformed maritime employees, and federal employees of the Coast and Geodetic Survey and the Lighthouse Service.

**A**ging Marine Hospital No. 19 at San Francisco was expanded almost every year, with frequent though often inadequate repairs and improvements keeping it in operation. One report described the process in some detail:

Four attendants have been continuously employed for ten and one-half months in painting, scraping, burning, and sandpapering the surfaces of executive building, kitchen and dining room building, officers and attendants quarters, Wards A, B, and D, pumping station, and stable. Interior work has also been performed by attendants in painting a large portion of the same buildings. The dispensary was remodeled and repaired throughout. The bacteriological laboratory has been fitted up in Ward B, and the new surgical operation room has been installed and equipped in Ward D. A large amount of minor repairs was performed on the heating and ventilating apparatus and on the walls and floors of the various buildings by hospital attendants, at a cost of material only. The executive building has been raised and placed upon a secure foundation, the old supporting walls rebuilt, and decayed timber removed, at a cost of \$785. Similar work has been done on the kitchen at a cost of \$225. Miscellaneous minor repairs have been performed under contract at a total cost of \$370.98.<sup>74</sup>

As early as 1894, photographs had been submitted to superiors in Washington showing the need for a new front hospital entrance, which included a bridge across Mountain Lake.<sup>75</sup> Some hospital officials thought that money was being wasted repairing old buildings, when the real need was for several new buildings. In 1907, Major William Harts, planning the future of the Presidio, revived earlier thinking by recommending that the hospital be moved to Angel Island.<sup>76</sup>

As the Marine Hospital neared its forty-sixth birthday, the surgeon general reported that its medical equipment was sufficient and up to date, but that hospital work was hampered by lack of room. He complained that the hospital was incapable of doing any laboratory work.<sup>77</sup>

The hospital buildings were not only functionally obsolete, but presented a serious fire hazard. Complaints continued, not just that the hospital was too small, but that its highly inflammable wards were constantly over-filled.<sup>78</sup> The patient load frequently exceeded the capacity of the hospital. Administrators hoped that pending legislation in 1924 would provide funds for additional buildings, but the bill failed to pass.<sup>79</sup> In 1925, the surgeon general reported an increase of 26 percent in outpatient treatment.<sup>80</sup> Outpatient work in 1926 alone nearly doubled.<sup>81</sup>

The wooden buildings eventually required replacement, but the Treasury Department, still mindful of its skirmishes with the Army, was reluctant to make the needed investment in a new hospital unless it "owned the land." For this reason, on March 3, 1927, a law was passed giving the Treasury Department primary jurisdiction and responsibility (commonly, but erroneously, called "ownership") over a 35.05-acre portion of the 86-acre leasehold estate on the Presidio, with the rest reabsorbed into Army property.<sup>82</sup> The 1927 law provided that Department of the Treasury land would revert to the War Department should it no longer be needed or used for hospital purposes.

While awaiting appropriations for the construction of a new hospital, in 1927 the old hospital provided care for a record 2,796 patients, a feat accomplished by shortening the time of care and speeding up the turnover rate, measures that brought the institution considerable criticism.<sup>83</sup> To relieve congestion, many patients were sent by contract to other area hospitals, and, by 1928, hospital admission was denied to

all but those in acute need of bed care.<sup>84</sup> Outpatient treatment, which had been provided at a downtown office in the customhouse, was transferred to the main hospital, worsening an already bad condition.

On March 3, 1928, a federal law was passed that finally provided the necessary funds—\$1,640,000—for the construction of a new Marine Hospital No. 19.<sup>85</sup> On April 9, 1930, ground was broken for a 460-bed facility.<sup>86</sup> The cornerstone was laid on October 23, 1930, and on December 4, 1930, work began on the nurses' quarters. On June 30, 1931, the project was reported 80 percent complete.<sup>87</sup> The original act for the construction of the new hospital was amended on March 4, 1931, to provide for the construction of an additional officers' quarters, a laboratory building, a recreational building, a storehouse, and a garage.<sup>88</sup>

The new hospital building of 472 beds was occupied November 6, 1931, by the transfer of 273 patients from the old hospital buildings. Overcrowding having been relieved, the number of patients gradually increased to 338 by the end of the fiscal year. The seventeen old wood-frame hospital buildings were promptly demolished, thus removing a serious fire hazard.<sup>89</sup>

Construction of the new hospital was one of the most ambitious building programs undertaken by the Public Health Service. Today, the new hospital complex remains essentially intact, though compromised by later additions, and in need of repairs following an earthquake in 1989. The main hospital building stands impressively on an elevated terrace just west of the site of the nineteenth-century hospital, and on an axis with the city's 15th Avenue on the south. The six-story reinforced-concrete building, clad in buff-colored brick, is now one of the largest historic buildings on the Presidio. The three-wing design of the new hospital recalls the configuration of the nineteenth-century facility, with its three radiating ward buildings. A large central wing, three stories in height, extends to the rear of the new hospital.

A large front addition, constructed in 1952, consists of two forward-projecting, seven-story end wings and a large one-story connector. It is clearly discernible as a separate and non-integral building. The added wings not only diminished the integrity of the existing hospital, but completely bastardized the building from an aesthetic perspective. They



obstruct the original front of the hospital building, though the original form of the hospital is still recognizable. Today, the PHS Hospital has stood twice as long with the aesthetically offensive appendages of brick and concrete as it stood before the unnatural addition was grafted on.

Other principal buildings of the 1931 complex included a recreation center, nurses' quarters, housing units, and laboratories. Three buildings of the original hospital that were relatively new and in good condition were kept and later used by the Army as senior enlisted men's quarters and officers' quarters.<sup>90</sup> The building now numbered 1810 is a two-story, wood-frame house, covered with stucco. It was built in 1915, and was the earliest building in a curving row of eight residences (now seven) situated on the rise along Wyman Avenue, overlooking Mountain Lake. This 3,000-square-foot house is the only residence in the row that faces north, away from the lake, although a bay porch on the east side takes advantage of the fine lake views, now compromised by the heavy traffic of Park Presidio Boulevard, the Highway 1 route to the Golden Gate Bridge.

On July 6, 1938, Wayne C. Taylor, acting secretary of the treasury, conveyed by quitclaim deed a .565-acre portion of hospital land to the state of California for part of the Funston Avenue approach to the Golden Gate Bridge. He exceeded his authority, since under the 1927 law this land should have reverted to the War Department when it was no longer needed by the hospital.

In 1939, all "marine" hospitals throughout the country were transferred from the Surgeon General's office under the Public Health Service to the Federal Security Agency, the predecessor of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW).<sup>91</sup> HEW was created in 1953, and in 1980 was reorganized and renamed the Department of Health and Human Services.

On June 7, 1963, HEW requested from the General Services Administration, the housekeepers of federal property, an additional 1.99 acres, and on October 29, 1964, the transfer of 1.99 acres of the Presidio was arranged to complete a safety area around the hospital's communicable disease laboratory.<sup>92</sup>

The federal government's Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 closed or transferred to other agencies all Public Health Service hospitals and clinics.<sup>93</sup> The San Francisco facility closed on November

1, 1981, and on November 10, the site was returned to the U.S. Army.<sup>94</sup> Once again, after more than a century, the area became part of the Presidio of San Francisco. However, it was transferred too late to be included in the area to be given to the Department of the Interior under the 1972 law that had created the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA).<sup>95</sup>

Since the landlocked 1.99-acre safety area, which had been added to the hospital grounds in 1964, was not subject to the 1927 reverter clause, it was not transferred to Department of Defense control, as was the rest of the PHS area. In 1981, the small parcel was offered to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which refused to accept it into the public domain. BLM argued that the land was too improved for BLM management and that its minerals were not suitable for mining.<sup>96</sup>

With the acquisition of the hospital area, the Army inherited a problem of traffic logistics. To get to the buildings of the 1800 area, buses, commercial traffic, and military traffic had to exit Presidio grounds and wind its way around to Lake Street. As a solution, it was proposed that Battery Caulfield Road be widened and extended to intersect with Wedemeyer Road, thus providing a Presidio path to the new acquisition. However, the Presidio was blocked from carrying out this plan because the 1.99-acre site had not been transferred back to the Army.<sup>97</sup> Among the various factors complicating the transfer, the Army now had a competitor that also wanted the apparently useless but potentially valuable land: the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The Army needed it to complete the above-mentioned road extension, and the GGNRA looked at it as a way of extending its holdings, should it ever acquire the 1800 area, a dream unrealized until September 1994. Gathering its forces, the Army decided to take whatever action was necessary or appropriate to secure the parcel.<sup>98</sup>

In the midst of these interagency wranglings, in November 1981 the disputed parcel was transferred to GSA for disposition.<sup>99</sup> The Army requested that a hold be placed on any disposal action until the Army could take steps to reacquire it.<sup>100</sup> As negotiations continued for Army acquisition of the 1.99-acre parcel, it was dubbed "Portion." The GSA told the Army that purchase of Portion would require pay-



The Public Health Service Hospital, October 1994. Although this building, No. 1801, has stood essentially vacant for several years, it is slated to undergo restoration to its original appearance and to serve as an important center of National Park activities. *Author's collection.*

ment at "full market price."<sup>101</sup> The Army in turn reminded the GSA that Portion had been a part of the Presidio of San Francisco, and requested that it now be transferred immediately back where it belonged—to the Army—at no cost, to accommodate road improvements that were scheduled to begin on April 1, 1983. All that was necessary would be a waiver to the Federal Transfer Reimbursement requirements.<sup>102</sup> The same spokesman for the Army pointed out that landlocked Portion had no market value except to the Presidio of San Francisco.<sup>103</sup> As late as December 5, 1983, the GSA had still not provided the Army with its estimate of value.<sup>104</sup> When the GSA decided that Portion was worth a half-million dollars—\$563,000, to be exact—the Army protested.<sup>105</sup>

In early 1984 the Army warned that if Portion were not transferred back, regardless of the method of transfer, the proposed road work would have to be canceled, and that another two years would pass before the work could be rescheduled, at much higher cost to the government.<sup>106</sup> The Army won this war of words and dollars when GSA reluctantly surrendered to the Army's argument that the parcel was

without value on the open market. GSA was not even reimbursed for "special uses" value.<sup>107</sup> After three years of wrangling, the transfer was approved on January 26, 1984. At this point, the entire blame for the GSA-Army dispute was placed squarely where it belonged, according to the Army: on GSA.<sup>108</sup> On May 21, 1984, GSA said that it no longer opposed a right-of-entry for Army use of Portion, pending formal transfer.<sup>109</sup> One week later an interim right-of-entry was given to the Army.<sup>110</sup>

The property was transferred on August 1, 1984.<sup>111</sup> It escaped inclusion in the Presidio National Park parcel for the same reason as had the main hospital area, that it had not been included in the 1972 transfer of some Presidio land to the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior.<sup>112</sup> In the last decade, various issues have clouded the hospital area's future.

Nearly ninety years after the epidemic of bubonic plague first gripped the city and mobilized medical personnel at the old Marine Hospital to wage war against the deadly virus, the successor PHS Hospital seemed on the brink of providing emergency care once again. The National



Defense Act of 1987 directed the secretary of the army to lease the "former Public Health Service facility" on the Presidio to the city and county of San Francisco for a period of ten years, beginning not later than January 1, 1989.<sup>113</sup> The purpose of this lease was for research, treatment, and nursing care of patients with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and AIDS-related Complex (ARC). Unfortunately, San Francisco negotiated this option without a financial plan, and it was ultimately unable to enter into the lease because of its lack of adequate funding.

Recently, environmental issues have also complicated disposition of the site. There are at least three landfills in the 1800 area, but no significant contamination has been found in any of them. Contamination was caused, however, where pesticides were kept in large quantities and for long periods in the gardener's combined office and insecticide storage building.<sup>114</sup> The potential for contamination from the suspicious landfills, widespread presence of asbestos, earth fills, surface deposits, and gravesites in the Marine Hospital cemetery caused numerous, sometimes bitter disputes involving the Army, the National Park Service, state agencies, environmental groups, and neighbors in adjacent residential areas.

Other difficulties have stemmed from the presence of varied historic resources. The Marine Hospital cemetery was well known at the turn of the twentieth century. It was the subject of an extensive 1896 newspaper article, but by mid-century, it seems to have been almost forgotten.<sup>115</sup> The administrators of the PHS Hospital decided to bury it beneath piles of debris, rubble, and fill, and to build a tennis court and parking lot on top of most of it. In 1989, during research as part of the baseline studies at the Presidio, the cemetery was, in a sense, rediscovered.<sup>116</sup> The Argonne National Laboratories, contracted by the U.S. Army to do the Enhanced Preliminary Assessment of contamination on the Presidio, including the original marine hospital area, reported the presence of an "unmarked cemetery," containing an estimated three hundred to five hundred gravesites dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>117</sup> Old photographs showed a large number of wooden grave markers.<sup>118</sup> The now-unmarked graves are still there, still buried under the tennis court and parking lot. Some are not far from the earth's surface. Several other abandoned improve-

ments in the PHS Hospital area were not addressed in the Enhanced Preliminary Assessment Report.<sup>119</sup>

The twenty-one buildings on the site relinquished to the Department of the Army in 1981 contained approximately 487,320 square feet. The most notable structure was Building 1801, having an area of approximately 379,268 square feet. It housed the main hospital, various laboratories, and a morgue. The remaining structures were residential buildings, animal and plague laboratories, administration buildings, an auditorium, a maintenance and boiler room, garages, and storage buildings.

Fifteen of the twenty-one buildings were eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>120</sup> Historic landscape features relating to the hospital area included the cemetery, the flagpole, walkways, roads, and parking areas for approximately 325 vehicles. The hospital area land is not included in the PSF National Historic Landmark District, but it is eligible for listing as part of the National Register Historic District for the Presidio of San Francisco and also for the PSF National landmark.<sup>121</sup>

Since its 1981 closing and turnover to the Army, the 1800-area buildings have sheltered, housed, and protected a vast number of tenants—private, municipal, state, and federal.<sup>122</sup> These tenants, some rent-free, others rent-paying, government and private, include the Defense Language Institute, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the United States Army Dental Institute Research Group, the San Francisco Regional Cancer Foundation, the Geriatric Day Treatment Center, and the Chinese American International School. The San Francisco Public Library occupied 18,000 square feet of the third and fourth floors of the main hospital building for the storage of 150,000 books left homeless after the 1989 earthquake.<sup>123</sup> This use continued, free of charge to the city, until July 1994.

The transfer of the Presidio from the Army to the National Park Service on September 30, 1994, culminated twenty-two years of agonizing, step-by-step compliance with the 1972 GGNRA law. As part of this process, on July 1, 1994, the 1800 area was transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington, which then had responsibility for the Sixth Army—which was to remain on the Presidio as a tenant of the GGNRA—and its properties as a subinstallation.

Two weeks before the transfer of the Presidio to the National Park Service, in anticipation of a boundary adjustment, Fort Lewis prepared the documentation necessary to transfer the PHISH area simultaneously to the Department of the Interior.<sup>124</sup> All this was done without the usual declaration of excess generally prepared by the transferring agency and approval by Headquarters Department of the Army required under Army Regulations 405-70 and 405-80. The GGNRA, accordingly, adjusted its boundaries to include the 1800 area as of September 27, 1994.<sup>125</sup> This transfer was formalized in a three-page letter of transfer sent by the secretary of the army to the secretary of the interior containing an addendum of acceptance signed by the latter.<sup>126</sup>

In the spring of 1995, the Department of the Army announced the dissolution of the Sixth Army, and on June 23 what was left of this organization marched off the Presidio of San Francisco and into oblivion, leaving the Presidio without a military presence for the first time in two and a quarter centuries.<sup>127</sup>

The Park Service may appear to have played largely in the background for the past two decades, but all the time it was actively preparing for the day of transfer. It took years to put together a master plan for the renovation of the Presidio—the “Presidio Project”—and in the summer of 1994, the Park Service finally published its long-promised and long-overdue Final General Management Plan Amendment.<sup>128</sup> This plan calls for removal of the southern wings, added to the hospital building in 1952, and conversion of the hospital into an educational convention center having lodging, dining facilities, and assembly spaces.

Long-range plans of the National Park Service include identifying, documenting, and protecting the Marine Hospital cemetery, which necessitates removing and relocating the parking lot and tennis court. The 14th Avenue gate is to be reopened for a one-way entry into the area from Lake Street, with 15th Avenue becoming a one-way exit.

The U.S. Marine Hospital, the Public Health Service Hospital, and the 1800 area are all names that describe major periods and aspects in the history of that parcel so far away that nobody wanted it. Now the unwanted parcel is about to enter upon its next major transformation. Who knows what it will be called? Or what it will be? Since Park Service plans look to the creation of a convention or educational

center, perhaps its fourth designation will be the “Convention Center.”

The National Park Service has defined its Presidio Project goals as follows:

- Promotion and advancement of research, education, policy formulation, training, and demonstration activities on environmental issues.

- Continuation of the Presidio’s role in training youth to serve their country, by promoting responsibility, leadership, stewardship, and community participation.

- Promotion of life and earth science research, emphasizing systems and methods to improve the quality of the environment and human health for future generations.

- To serve as a center for multicultural and international exchange and education.

- To be a center for programs, training, and research activities and conferences on local, national and global issues.<sup>129</sup>

These noble goals are within reach of a people determined to preserve, protect, beautify, and enjoy its cultural heritage. The same hard work, dedication, and sacrifice that created the Presidio of San Francisco to guard its harbors from foreign foes can with the same determination create a unique, urban Presidio National Park for the enjoyment of future generations, on the same shores of the Pacific, overlooking the same Golden Gate. CHS

*See notes beginning on page 184.*

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*A graduate of Stanford University and a former professor of history, Dr. Norman E. Tutorow is a widely published military and western historian and is active in the San Francisco Corral of Westerners International. His numerous publications include Leland Stanford, Man of Many Careers; Texas Annexation and the Mexican War; and The Mexican American War: An Annotated Bibliography. At the time of this writing, he was chief of the Master Planning Branch, Presidio of San Francisco, where his last official action was to prepare the real estate documents for transfer of the Presidio from the Department of the Army to the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.*



*Edited by James J. Rawls*

## *Regulars in the Redwoods: The U.S. Army in Northern California, 1852-1861.*

By William F. Strobebridge. (Spokane: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1994, 283 pp., \$29.95 cloth.)

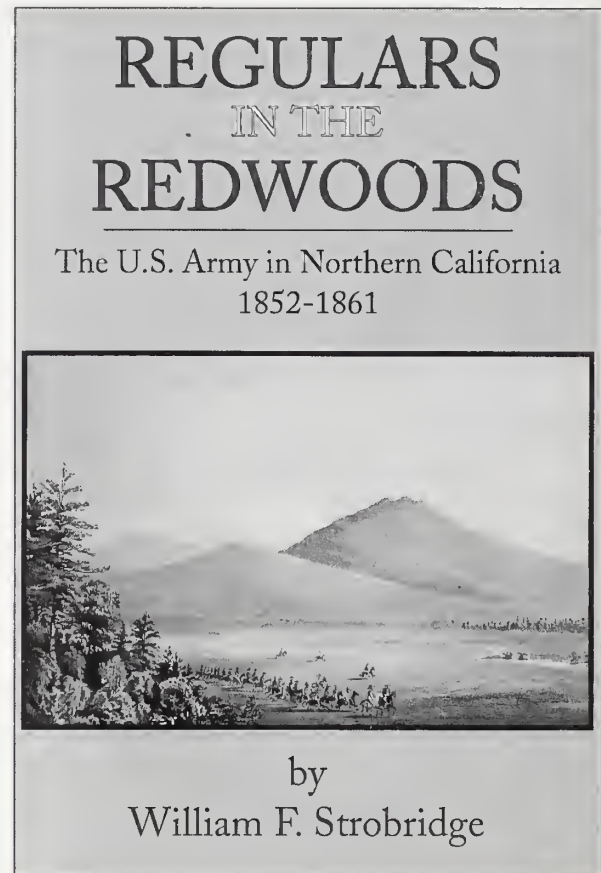
*Reviewed by Gerald Thompson, professor of history at the University of Toledo and author of Edward F. Beale and the American West.*

This is the first monographic treatment to examine the complicated relations of military, Indians, and civilians in northwestern California during the critical decade of the 1850s. Few readers will be surprised by the theme of failure that permeates Strobebridge's book. The Army's role in carrying out Indian policy was ill defined, and Indian relations were subject to the changing vagaries of the state's political climate, which offered no sanctuaries for Native Americans.

The author's thorough research leads one to conclude that, in the decade before the Civil War, California became the scene of the one of the saddest chapters of American Indian history. Intense bureaucratic in-fighting between the Indian Office and the military exacerbated the situation as officers and Indian agents blamed each other for Indian troubles. But California also presented a unique problem for the military—a numerous and aggressive civilian population composed largely of young miners. The civilians often formed volunteer forces, sometimes with the sanction of state government, and proceeded in a series of massacres to inflict enormous casualties on nearby Indians. Hundreds, if not thousands, of California Indians were killed by volunteers during the 1850s, while the regular army remained helpless to prevent their activities. Military policy thus focused on futile attempts to move the tribes to safety away from settlers. By the end of the decade the federal government, stymied by local public sentiment, proved unable or unwilling to establish large, secure reservations, thus sealing the fate of countless Native Americans.

It would be naive to think that a greater expenditure of federal funds could have alleviated the problem, but both Indian Office and U.S. Army were constrained by money problems. For Indians, underfunding meant starvation and disease, but even the Army's enlisted personnel suffered. The author devotes a number of pages to documenting the miserable quality of daily life at such forgotten northern posts as Fort Gaston, Fort Terwaw, Fort Crook, and Fort Jones. Many of the officers who led small detachments from these posts went on to Civil War careers in both the Union and Confederate armies. The book's first appendix provides a handy list of those men who later gained the rank of general, while a second gives the names of all commanders who served at the fifteen regional posts.

*Regulars in the Redwoods* is an important book for anyone interested in Native American studies or California history. William F. Strobebridge deserves high praise for bringing to light the details of this unpleasant era. One puts down this book with a feeling of sympathy for both Indians and military officers. Typical of the latter was Captain Edward Johnson, the humanitarian com-



This dust-jacket illustration of Mount Lassen is from an original nineteenth-century lithograph. Courtesy of the Arthur H. Clark Company.

mander of short-lived Fort Weller, who in 1859 wrote, "I believe it to be the settled determination of many of the inhabitants to exterminate the Indians, and I can see no way of preventing it" (p. 189). It was an apt summary for the place and the era. Despite good intentions from many Army officers, almost nothing was done by the federal or state government to prevent an unfolding tragedy.

Books sent to *California History* for review that are not reviewed, but pertain to the collection, are catalogued in the California Historical Society library.



Elizabeth "Eliza" Marshall Gregson (1824–1889) and her husband, James, arrived at Sutter's Fort, now Sacramento, after an arduous 1845 overland journey that Eliza described in her memoirs and is recaptured in *Pioneers of California*. Courtesy of California Department of Parks and Recreation and Scottwall Associates, Publishers.

### *Pioneers of California: True Stories of Early Settlers in the Golden State.*

By Donovan Lewis. (San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1993, xv, 567 pp., \$26.95 cloth.)

Reviewed by Daniel W. Markwyn, professor of history at Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California.

In *Pioneers of California*, Donovan Lewis sets out to provide "an enlarged encyclopedia" of forty-nine biographical sketches of early Californians ranging in length from five to twenty-one pages. Familiar figures such as Nancy Kelsey, Mariano Vallejo, and John Bidwell appear, but in his effort to provide more than the *Pioneer Register* but less than full-blown biographies, Lew also includes less well known Californians, such as Sarah Montgomery Wallis and Fung Cheong Yee. Reminiscent in purpose

of George Wharton James's *Heroes of California* published in 1910—both writers profess belief in the power of biography to encourage emulation—Lewis differs from James in his decision to focus on the Mexican period. That narrow chronological focus and a cast mainly of travelers and settlers makes for a book bursting with the restlessness that has fueled European expansion since the sixteenth century.

Why did they come, those men and women who made the cut and qualified for Lewis's pioneer roster? They came for opportunity, most frequently in the form of land, according to Lewis. "Pioneerlike," they saw a chance—however dimly—to improve their lot and took it, often suffering and inflicting suffering along the way. (In some cases, of course, as wives or children they had little choice in the matter.) These settlers' "connection with meaningful events," once in California, persuaded Lewis to include them. Lewis hastens to make clear that many other characters could have been included in the book, but that availability of evidence and his "subjective judgment" determined the lineup. That subjectivity is most evident, perhaps, in the inclusion of President James K. Polk, who never ventured west but whose policies surely affected those who did.

Early Californians seldom lived cheek by jowl with one another, but their lives often converged, as Lewis makes clear in his book. This condition of interwoven lives increases the likelihood of repetition in narrowly focused biographical sketches like those in *Pioneers of California*. Lewis assures readers, however, that he has done what he can to avoid needless repetition and that only "unavoidable duplication" remains. Perhaps, but at least one more editorial round could have confirmed that judgment and also caught the occasional errors and inconsistencies that do appear. More careful editorial attention to the brief bibliographies that follow each entry would also have improved the book. Although they direct attention to useful sources, the bibliographies are uneven in quality and must be used with care. Decisions to identify sources of quoted passages only occasionally and then to omit page numbers when the general source is identified further weaken the book's scholarly apparatus.

Asprightly style makes for pleasurable reading of this handsome book, which unfortunately includes distracting typos on its pages. Photographs or drawings attach faces to names; useful maps appear on the endpapers, an historical calendar precedes the text, and a cross-referenced index follows it. Lewis tells a good story and although he pays little attention to "why" questions, preferring to describe rather than to analyze, the book should find many readers.

Lewis includes biographies of five women, one Chinese man and a general chapter on "Indians of California," but overall he follows a well-worn trail by emphasizing the experiences of *californio* and European men. Similarly, although Lew is sometimes alludes to the darker side of the lives and the period he describes, he celebrates regularly the determination and grit of the "intrepid men and women" who in his judgment contributed significantly to the development of an American state and who thus qualify as "Pioneers of California."



## *A New Life: Danish emigration to North America as described by the emigrants themselves in letters, 1842-1946.*

By Niels Peter Stilling and Anne Lisbeth Olsen. Translated by Karen Veien. (Aalborg, Denmark: Danes Worldwide Archive, 1994, 215 pp., illus., \$15 cloth. Distributed in the United States by the Danish Immigrant Museum, Elk Horn, Iowa 51531).

*Reviewed by Daniel Cornford, associate professor of history, San Jose State University and editor of Working People of California and co-editor (with Sally M. Miller) of American Labor in the Era of World War II.*

Between 1820 and 1940, almost 400,000 Danes emigrated to the United States. Based on letters written by fifty Danish immigrants, *A New Life* provides a vivid depiction of the Danish immigrant experience in America. Through an introductory chapter and textual comments on the letters throughout the book, the authors do an excellent job of putting this experience in a wider context.

While, in terms of settlement patterns, few immigrant groups have been so widely and thinly dispersed as the Danes, California attracted a significant Danish population. By 1920, over 40,000 people of Danish descent lived in California, almost twice the number of Norwegians. The five decennial censuses taken from 1920 to 1960 revealed that at every census California had the largest Danish-born population of any state. The Danish presence in California is well reflected in this book. Eight of the fifty letter-writers resided for part of their lives in California.

Most commonly, Californians associate the Danish presence in California with Solvang and Peter Lassen. Not so well known is the important role Danes played in the development of certain California industries, among the most important of which were the dairying and maritime industries. So large was the presence of Danes and their Scandinavian cousins on the coastwise fleet that it was dubbed by many "the Scandinavian Navy."

Good collections of immigrant letters, such as those in this book, provide an illuminating window into almost every aspect of history. Readers with an interest in subjects as diverse as agricultural technology, Native Americans, women, land policy, labor history, social and geographic mobility, and religion (to name but a few), will find much of interest in *A New Life*.

As a whole, the letters in this book reveal a remarkable diversity of Danish immigrant experiences. While the majority of correspondents did not regret their emigration and were economically successful, a significant number did not find the streets and farms of North America paved with gold. Even the contented and successful often experienced loneliness and a yearning for the old country. And, among this supposedly most assimilable immigrant group, there are numerous references to language problems and sometimes to Americans who "always despise and mock other nationalities" (p. 92).

When not speaking of their personal experiences, the letter-

writers provide eloquent commentary on life in their adopted country. Writing of life in Chicago in the mid-1890s, one Danish immigrant observed that "the faces looking out of the elevated trains reflect every paradigm of exhaustion, and you are left with the sad impression that there is time for nothing but work and sleep" (p. 131). Two letters from Ferndale, written in the late 1880s, indicate that life in rural northern California was equally exacting.

Readers ranging from those with a broad interest in American history to the California history buff will find this a highly engaging book with insights not only into the Danish immigrant experience, but many other facets of American life.

## *San Francisco Memoirs 1835-1851: Eyewitness Accounts of the Birth of a City.*

By Malcom E. Barker. (San Francisco: Londonborn Publications, 1994, 320 pp., \$14.95 paper.)

## *Hometown San Francisco: Sunny Jim, Phat Willie, and Dave.*

By Jerry Flamm. (San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1994, xiv, 177 pp., \$27.95 cloth.)

*Reviewed by Richard Batman, professor of history at San Francisco State University and author of American Ecclesiastes and The Outer Coast.*

These books have little in common other than that they are both about "The City." *San Francisco Memoirs, 1835-1851* is Malcom E. Barker's compilation of visitors' descriptions of San Francisco just before and during the Gold Rush. It is a classic example of the "foreign traveler" approach, relying mainly on the writings of visitors. Jerry Flamm's *Hometown San Francisco*, on the other hand, is an account of twentieth-century San Francisco by a man who was born and raised there. It is an example of an equally classic approach, that of the insider who has lived his whole life in the city. Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages, but ultimately it is the editor or author who has to make them work.

Barker, in his introduction, shows considerable understanding of his role as editor. His criterion for selecting material is "that each one should be an eyewitness account of a particular aspect of life in San Francisco during those early pioneer days." He promises to keep editorial comments to a minimum so these people can "tell us their stories in their own individual styles, regardless of whether they now sound archaic or alien."

It is a perceptive view of the editor's role: get out of the way and let the reader read. Unfortunately, Barker does not always follow his own advice. To his preface he adds a brief essay,



San Francisco, 1849. This lithograph, after a work "Drawn on the Spot by Henry Firks," was "corrected by a committee of pioneers," including Richard M. Sherman, William Heath Davis, and Ferdinand Vassault. *California Historical Society, Title Insurance and Trust Photo Collection, Department of Special Collections, University of Southern California Library.*

"What's in a name," followed by a long introduction called "A City is Born." Neither adds much except to leave the reader waiting impatiently to get on with the book. Once past these obstacles, however, Barker lives up to his promise of refraining from editorial comment. His excerpts are well-chosen, the only drawback being those common to books of short excerpts, the constant shifting of voices from one author to another and the lack of anything more than brief, cursory descriptions.

These are not the drawbacks of Jerry Flamm's insider account. There is only one voice, that of the author, and he has plenty of room to describe three aspects of San Francisco life—Sunny Jim Rolph as mayor, the early days of boxing, and an account of his own father's thirty years as a San Francisco policeman.

The book is written in a breezy, gossipy, first-hand style, so much the insider's voice that those who are not lifelong residents of San Francisco may feel left out. Flamm does combine memories with material compiled from interviews and research, a valuable addition but not very well integrated. Historic events from a time long before Flamm was born are introduced in that same gossipy insider's voice. Frequently, too, he begins his own story, then quickly leaps to another time and place. It is often confusing, occasionally reaching the level of Mark Twain's Jim Blaine, who in telling the story of his grandfather's old ram, wanders into so many by-ways he finally loses the whole point of his story.

Both books, then, have shortcomings. Yet both are well worth reading, the first for short, scattered insights into gold-rush San Francisco, the second for a meandering, first-hand account of the city early in this century.

### *Jack London, Revised Edition.*

By Earle Labor and Jeanne Campbell Reesman. (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994, xvii, 186 pp., \$21.95 cloth.)

### *The Portable Jack London.*

Edited by Earle Labor. (New York: Penguin Books, 1994, xxxvii, 563 pp., \$13.95 paper.)

*Reviewed by Gary Topping, assistant professor of history, Salt Lake Community College.*

In 1976, the centennial of Jack London's birth, Twayne Publishers issued Earle Labor's *Jack London* as part of its United States Authors Series. Based on exhaustive research in the London papers and critical appraisal of London's immense oeuvre of over six hundred published works, it was the first adequate critical biography of one of America's most prolific and best-known writers. In a caustic introduction, Labor chided previous London critics for laziness in failing to appreciate both the breadth and depth of London's work, relying instead on rereadings of only a few shelfworn titles and contenting themselves with facile images of London the socialist, the naturalist, the hack producer of potboilers who ran out of creative steam in mid-career.

Labor's biography was a slim but exciting essay that plunged his readers deeply into the neglected riches of London's work, repeatedly hammering home his thesis that London was a





Jack and Charmian London on the steps of the Kohler-Frohling Winery cottage on their Valley of the Moon Ranch. The winery operated from 1884 until 1910, when London bought the property and used the cottage for extra housing and storage of wine vats. The cottage burned in 1965. *Courtesy of the Trust of Irving Shepard.*

major writer of extraordinary diversity and depth who retained his originality to the very end of his life. One happy result was an energizing of London studies over the past two decades, as critics began taking London seriously and exploring in depth some of the themes and works to which Labor had called attention. A secondary result was to render Labor's original work increasingly outdated. Consequently, Labor has enlisted the assistance of Jeanne Campbell Reesman, whose London research has focused on gender themes and Jungian undercurrents suggested by Labor's original book, in preparing a revised edition. The stated goals of the revision are to integrate the results of London research since 1976, and to refute two persistent misconceptions: that London's creativity was inhibited by the demands of the popular publishers for whom he wrote, and that his creativity dropped off during his last decade of life.

Any remaining skeptics might well be referred to Labor's generous anthology, *The Portable Jack London* (coincidentally issued almost simultaneously with Viking Penguin's *Portable Jack Kerouac*, that other modern celebrant of life on the road). In view of the fact that many London works upon which Labor's reappraisal rests are not only unread but virtually unavailable, the anthology fills a vital function in allowing us to follow Labor off the rutted routes and out into the fertile fields of London's creativity.

Given the vast size and diversity of London's work (Labor's introduction lists, by my count, no less than fifty-three major themes with which London dealt), it would be impossible for Labor to have pleased every London *aficionado* in his selections for an anthology of six hundred pages. My only serious complaint is his inclusion of the complete text of *The Call of the Wild*

which, while it surely is London's masterpiece, is so readily available elsewhere that its appearance here seems a redundant misuse of precious space. Otherwise, Labor's selection seems sagacious: a generous grouping of short stories (including two significantly variant versions of "To Build a Fire," and the unique and largely unknown "Told in the Drooling Ward"), non-fiction articles on such themes as the writer's craft and socialism, which reveal much about London's mind and work, and a skimpy but effective selection of some thirty letters.

Labor's explanation of the agonizing selection process for the anthology (pp. xxvii-xxxvi) is a helpful guide to the worthy works omitted. Both volumes, too, contain annotated bibliographies, including London organizations and periodicals.

## *The Arts and Crafts Movement in California: Living the Good Life.*

Edited by Kenneth R. Trapp. (New York: Abbeville Press, 1993, 328 pp., \$55.00 cloth.)

*Reviewed by Anthony W. Lee, assistant professor of art history, University of Texas at Dallas.*

This book has several ambitions: to accompany a three-city traveling exhibition by the same title, to survey a fairly obscure chapter of early California art, to present new materials about individual artists, craftsmen, guilds, and companies, and to pro-

vide some kind of ideological or at least thematic coherency to a rather disparate body of objects and practitioners. Of the first two, there can be little doubt that Trapp and the book's seven other contributors have done an admirable job. The pages are filled with some remarkably splendid photographs of Arts and Crafts objects, so that readers who have had the good fortune to see the exhibition will have the chance to reacquire themselves with the works once again and to scrutinize them amidst nine relatively uncomplicated art historical narratives (devoted to various media and to the three most active sites—San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego). And for the less fortunate reader, the color photography is so crisp that the book really is the next best thing to the live show. The sheer quality of reproductions and clarity of organization is the goal to which most museum catalogs ought to aspire.

As for the presentation of new research, Trapp has been conscientious about offering the book as a resource. There is a long and very useful section on artist biographies and company histories—some seventy in all—and all of the data is listed in abbreviated, chronological fashion. Along with specific details in the essays, these materials are the results of hard digging at several of the state's most important archives and a thorough scouring of the many early Arts and Crafts periodicals, and the book represents the first such attempt at comprehensiveness. There are a number of notable revelations, including the direct and free-flowing links between California guilds and midwestern and eastern centers, the kinds of reformist politics and political associations held by many of the practitioners, the fundamentally middle-class character of nearly all of the craftsmen (especially those claiming either socialist or mystic agendas), and the clear institutional ties between entrepreneurs and local schools. The entries cover all of the more famous characters, including Bernard Maybeck and the Greene brothers, to some extraordinarily obscure ones, including the potter Cornelius Brauckman and several short-lived Bay Area and Southland potteries. Any further explorations on the topic will inevitably turn to this summary as a basic map.

What is really interesting about the book is the problematic attempt at coherency. For Arts and Crafts, as one of the contributors explains, was not a specific style but a "mood, an attitude, a sensibility." But of course, the writers are faced with quite specific objects (with decided formal interests) from distinct and sometimes insulated portions of a very large state. The collective wisdom that emerges from the nine essays seems a bit too pat. Arts and Crafts in California, we are told, is held together by a shared belief in the compatibility of material and spiritual well-being (the "good life," as Trapp proclaims), an emotional and intellectual investment in a regional landscape and its representation, and a certain fetishizing of the *activity* of art-making. Within this relatively ambiguous but fully inclusive model, nearly everything that was produced by hand in California between 1900 and 1915 signifies as Arts and Crafts, and indeed the book has just as much trouble defining what is not exemplary of the movement as it does in defining what, in fact, is.

### *"We, the People!": Bay Area Activism in the 1960s: Three Case Studies.*

By Richard DeLuca. (San Bernardino, Calif.: The Borgo Press, 1994, 144 pp., \$27.00 cloth, \$17.00 paper.)

*Reviewed by W. J. Rorabaugh, professor of history at the University of Washington and author of Berkeley at War: The 1960s.*

This short, arid book presents three essays on Bay Area controversies about the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), about freeways, and about Alcatraz Island. On HUAC, Richard DeLuca describes how anti-committee protesters in San Francisco in 1960 were washed down the stairs of city hall and how HUAC subsequently made *Operation Abolition*, a popular film of the event that aided the Right. Despite the bad publicity, this demonstration marked the end of the repression of civil liberties, signaled a rising involvement of students in politics, and led to Berkeley's Free Speech Movement in 1964. Although DeLuca's account of this episode is readable, the research is not thorough. He uses newspapers incompletely, cites no sources published after 1984, and overlooks important works, including Frank Donner's *The Un-Americans* (1961), a book that remains crucial to understanding the incident.

DeLuca's study of a popular revolt against freeways in San Francisco from 1958 to 1966 is more successful. Well-organized neighborhoods opposed to urban freeways defeated downtown commercial interests in a victory often portrayed as the beginning of a national movement. DeLuca finds the crucial turning point to be the completion of the Embarcadero Freeway, which opened in 1959 and ruined the view of the city's beloved Ferry Building. Within six months, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which had backed the elevated road's construction, demanded that it be torn down. San Franciscans concluded that highway planners ignored the impact of roads on urban life, and in 1966 the city permanently rejected new freeways. In 1989 an earthquake finally led to the demolition of the Embarcadero Freeway.

On Alcatraz, DeLuca shows how the federal government was forced to adopt a defensive posture in 1969, when dozens of American Indians occupied the abandoned federal prison on the island for eighteen months. They demanded recognition of their claim of ownership. Disillusionment over the Vietnam War, a general distrust of government, a romantic attitude toward American Indians, and environmentalism combined to give the Indians an edge with Bay Area public opinion. Appearances, however, can be deceiving, and in 1971 federal marshals removed the remaining Indians from the island, which became a park.

DeLuca offers a limited conclusion. These three case studies, he says, show a rising concern for civil liberties and civil rights and display a growing environmentalism that can be seen as a complementary land ethic. This is a thin observation to be derived from such robust controversies.







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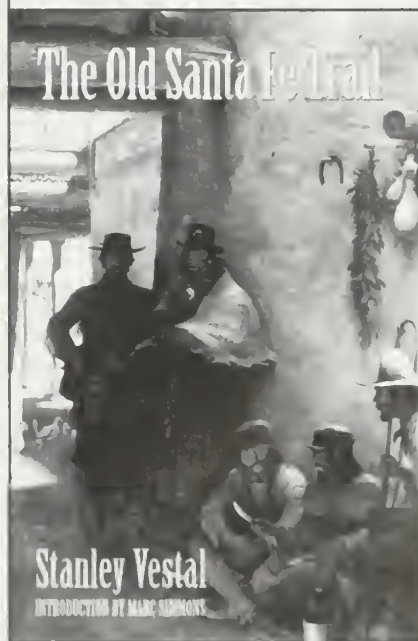
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Williams, "Fuel at Last," pp. 114-127.

1. John S. Hittell, *The Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast of North America*, 2d ed. (San Francisco, 1882), 317; Gerald T. White, *Formative Years in the Far West: A History of the Standard Oil Company of California and Predecessors through 1919* (New York, 1962), 16-18, and "California's Other Mineral," *Pacific Historical Review* 34 (May 1970): 140; W. H. Hutchinson, *Oil, Land and Politics: The California Career of Thomas Robert Bard*, 2 vols. (Norman, OK, 1965), 1:140-43.
2. Titus Fey Cronise, *Natural Wealth of California* (San Francisco, 1868), 598, 626, 675.
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4. *The [Weekly] Price Current* (San Francisco, 26 February 1883): 1; "Los Angeles Oil" and "The Oil Trade," *Resources of California* (November 1883): 7, and (November 1884): 16.
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miral Selwyn, "The Existing State of the Fluid Fuel Question," *Transactions of the Technical Society of the Pacific Coast* 10 (September 1893): 187-98.

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10. White, *Formative Years*, 135, 137; Hutchinson, *Oil, Land and Politics*, 2:8-19.
11. Prutzman, *Production and Use*, 114-15, 124-25; "California Petroleum as Fuel for Steamers," *Engineering and Mining Journal* 77 (28 April 1904): 678; Santa Maria Chamber of Commerce, *The Santa Maria Oil Fields*, No. Santa Barbara Co., Cal. (June 1907), pamphlet, "Energy Products—oil, gas, etc." box, Romaine Trade Catalog Collection, University of California, Santa Barbara; Paddock, "Liquid Fuel," 247; U.S. Department of the Navy, *Report of the U.S. Naval 'Liquid Fuel' Board* (Washington, D.C., 1904), 396; J. H. Hopps, "Marine Use of Fuel Oil," *Journal of Electricity, Power and Gas* 26 (18 March 1911): 245-47 (hereinafter JEPG); Harold F. Williamson, et al., *The American Petroleum Industry*, 2 vols. (Evanston, IL, 1959, 1963), 2:182; White, "California's Other Mineral," 140.
12. *Petroleum in California*, 99; "Petroleum Fuel on the Pacific Coast," *Industry* 1 (May 1889): 151; Hutchinson, *Oil, Land and Politics*, 2:47, 64, 73; Richard Charles Schwarzman, *The Pinal Dome Oil Company: An Adventure in Business, 1901-1917* (New York, 1976), 47-49; Watts, "Oil as Fuel," 662-63.
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16. White, *Formative Years*, 155-57, 239; Hutchinson, *Oil, Land and Politics*, 2:82-83; "A New California Pipeline," *Engineering and Mining Journal* 78 (3 November 1904): 712.
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18. *Ibid.*, 241, 259; *Report of the Federal Trade Commission*, 1:22, 155-57; Williamson, et al., *American Petroleum Industry*, 2:72.
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  24. Quote in White, *Formative Years*, 420, also 356-60; California State Board of Agriculture, *Annual Report of the Statistician* (Sacramento, 1912), 223; *Mineral Resources*, 1912, 337.
  25. California Railroad Commission, *Report of the Railroad Commission of California from July 1, 1919 to June 30, 1920* (Sacramento, 1920), 100, and *July 1, 1922 to June 30, 1923* (1924), 86; Mark Requa, "The Fuel Resources of California," *Transactions of the Commonwealth Club* 7 (June 1912): 198; White, *Formative Years*, 411, 419; California State Board of Agriculture, *Annual Report of the Statistician* (Sacramento, 1913), 191; *Mineral Resources*, 1915, 983-84; Charles I. Hutchinson, "Compressor Plant of the Southern California Gas Company," *Western Engineering* 4 (May 1914): 344; U.S. Geological Survey, *Hydroelectric Power Systems of California and Their Extensions into Oregon and Nevada*, Water Supply Paper 493, by Frederick Hall Fowler (Washington, D.C., 1923), 874.
  26. "High Pressure Gas Transmission," JEPG 31 (16 August 1913): 158; California Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mines, Bulletin No. 156, *Mineral Commodities of California* (San Francisco, 1950), 72; *Mineral Resources*, 1938, 938; Elizabeth M. Sanders, *The Regulation of Natural Gas: Policy and Politics, 1938-1978* (Philadelphia, 1981), 24-25; "Western Power and Fuel Outlook—2, Natural Gas," *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Monthly Review* (May 1949): 58-59.
  27. White, *Formative Years*, 145-48, 244, 250-51.
  28. *Ibid.*, 420-21, 477-78, 559-60; *Minerals Yearbook, 1919* pt. 2, 521, 1921 pt. 2, 243; Kenyon L. Reynolds, "The Natural Gasoline Industry," *California Engineer* 3 (October 1924): 38-39.
  29. *Federal Trade Commission*, 1:168-74; Williamson, et al., 2:151-59, 391-93; Reynolds, "Natural Gasoline," 38.
  30. *Mineral Resources, 1930*, Pt. 2, 452, and 1934, 742; L. F. English, "The Small Town Gas Company," *California Journal of Development* 21 (September 1931): 12-13, 50; "Gas Competition," JLPG 65 (1 August 1930): 58-61.
- Rolle, "Turbulent Waters," pp. 128-137.**
1. Recent court cases have unearthed long forgotten data regarding use of the San Joaquin-Sacramento Valley river system. Legal research prepared in such cases is proving to be of much value to historians of the Central Valley and its adjoining Sierra range. The author was a consultant to the California Department of Justice in *Nickel Enterprises and Rio Bravo No. 1 vs. State of California, Kern River Public Access Committee and other Defendants*. This case (No. 199557) was heard during 1993 in the Superior Court at Bakersfield.
  2. See F. F. Latta, *Handbook of the Yokuts Indians* (Bakersfield: Kern County Museum), 46, including his notes and a sketch of an Indian bridge across the Kern River; also James B. Snyder, *Inventory of the Ethnographic Papers of Frank Forrest Latta* (Yosemite National Park: National Park Service Research Library, 1990), 6.
  3. The Kern has more miles of water termed "wild" and "scenic" than any other river in the continental United States. In 1987 an act of Congress designated the Kern a "National Wild and Scenic River."
  4. Latta states that "the most noted Yowlumne landmark was at the mouth of Kern Canyon, where the waters of Kern River make a slight fall." These natives also lived on "the north bank of Kern River northeast of the foot of China Grade....and beginning just below the bridge at the Rio Bravo Rancho, another Yowlumne village straggled downstream for about a mile." See Latta, *Handbook*, 28, 45. Eventually, however, such tribes would be decimated by cholera and malaria.
  5. There is some question as to whether Godey was actually on Fremont's fifth expedition. See Mark J. Stegmaier and David H. Miller, *James F. Milligan: His Journal of Fremont's Fifth Expedition* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1988), 105n. But also see "Lux v. Haggin," 69 Cal. Case 255, Transcript of Testimony," April 15, 1881, Vol. I, 46, 47, in the extensive Miller and Lux Collection within the Frank Latta Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino; also Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence, *The Expeditions of John C. Fremont* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), Vol. I, 274-81, 666; Andrew Rolle, *John Charles Fremont: Character as Destiny* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 41-42, 55, 61-62.
  6. Locke's company charged ten cents per ton to move cargo up the Mokelumne, according to Jerry MacMullen, *Paddle-Wheel Days in California* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1944), 45-47. A short summary of inland navigation is in S. I. Harding, *Water in California* (Palo Alto: N. P. Publications, 1960), 71-78.
  7. The average mean yearly discharge of the Kern was 1,100 cubic feet per second, while the Mokelumne figure was 1,321. See C. F. Read, C. L. Grunsky, and J. J. Crawford, *Report of the Fluvial Commission on the River and Harbor* (Sacramento State Printing Office, 1890), 107-37, as background. Also see *Report of the Board of Commissioners on the Irrigation of the San Joaquin, Tulare, and Sacramento Valleys of the State of California* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1874), also William L. Preston, *Vanishing Landscapes: Land and Life in the Tulare Basin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 18, 94, 97, 107, 143.
  8. Testimony of John Barker, April 18, 1881, in "Lux v. Haggin" Vol. II, 47, 202, 205-206, 215-16, 223, 225, 227.
  9. They also became petroleum developers; see Wallace M. Morgan, *History of Kern County, California* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1914), 49-50, 222-23, 1292-94.
  10. M. Catherine Miller, *Flooding the Courtrooms: Law and Water in the Far West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 11, describes Henry Miller and Charles Lux's legal battle with James Ben Ali Haggin and Lloyd Tevis, who had incorporated the Kern County Land Company in 1890. The result of this suit affected water rights decisions for decades to come.
  11. Crocker described logs "some of them 40 or 50 feet long...some of them 2 foot through" coming from the mountains "to a point well below Rio Bravo Ranch during flood times." Testimony of J. C. Crocker, April 19, 1881, Vol. III, "Lux v. Haggin," 390-91, 591-93, 607-610, 616-18.
  12. Testimony of Elisha Stephens, April 15, 1881, *ibid.*, Vol. I, 58-60.
  13. Testimony of J. C. Crocker, *ibid.*, Vol. II, 390-91, and Vol. VII, 591-93. See also Naomi E. Bain, "The Story of Colonel Thomas Baker and the Founding of Bakersfield" (M.A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1941), 33, 73.
  14. Quote is from William Harland Boyd, *A Californian Middle Border. The Kern River Country, 1720-1880* (Richardson, Texas: Havilah Press, 1972), 120.
  15. Miller and Lux operated their properties from a headquarters at the Bloomfield Ranch near Gilroy near the coast. Later they moved their main office to San Francisco, where they directed river operations to a number of outposts. For the years 1873-74 see Miller and Lux Collection, Huntington Library 1 (4), documents 282, 291, and 572. For the 1880s, see such typical correspondence as ML-1A, 466-67.
  16. Testimony of C. W. Clark, April 21, 1881, "Lux v. Haggin" Vol. V, 1052-53. This case resulted from a conflict between Miller and Lux and their main opponent, capitalist James Ben Ali Haggin, an associate of George Hearst. See Miller *Flooding the Courtrooms*, 11.
  17. See map showing tour Miller and Lux prop-



- erties along the Kern River in Edward F. Treadwell, *The Cattle King* (New York: Macmillan, 1931), endpapers; also Miller and Lux Collections, Huntington Library, Maps L2 and 6 (1) 23).
18. Testimony of F. A. Tracy, April 20, 1881, "Lux v. Haggin," Vol IV, 918-19. Also consult Stephen Johnson, Gerald Haslam, and Robert Dawson, *The Great Central Valley: California's Heartland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), and Haslam's "The Lake That Will Not Die," *California History* LXXII (Fall 1993): 271, which reproduces a sketch from Wallace W. Elliot & Co., *History of Tulare County, California...* (1883).
19. Testimony of Elisha Stephens, "Lux v. Haggin Transcript," Vol. I, p. 87, MLSA Box 1.
20. Latta stated that Indian "fishing rafts were also used on the rivers." See Latta, *Handbook*, 81, 147.
21. Dictation taken by E. W. Fowler, one of historian H. H. Bancroft's interviewers, Miller and Lux Collection, Huntington Library, Box 6, 1A-1.
22. Miller and Lux Collection, Huntington Library, 1 (4) 579; also Morgan, *History of Kern County*, 48.
23. Morgan, *History of Kern County*, 23-24.
24. See Andrew Rolle and Iris Engstrand's three volume manuscript treatise entitled *A Study of Laws and Custom Pertaining to the Use of Water in California Under Spain and Mexico*, prepared for Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 650,079. Their conclusion was that the city of Los Angeles had no Spanish or Mexican "prior and paramount pueblo right" to underground water. On the same issue, consult Daniel Tyler, *The Mythical Pueblo Rights Doctrine...* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1990).
25. Continuing severe conflicts over water, other than for navigation, included the celebrated *Lux v. Haggin*, 69, Cal. 255, a key case that ran from 1879 to 1886, described in Norris Hundley, Jr., *The Great Thirst: Californians and Water, 1770s-1990s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 91-97. American squatters also sought to nail down whatever leftover claims they could grab. For small ranchers, as well as Miller and Lux, cattle and sheep raising depended heavily upon retaining both riparian and navigation rights.
26. Later, there would be conflict over the public's right to use river banks and even the surface of streams and lakes for fishing, boating, or bathing. In the Central Valley, and elsewhere too, bitter quarrels continue to arise over specific uses of water by property owners. Tensions linger on between claimants of existing rights and "the public interest." The state of California has fended off repeated legal challenges to the public's right to utilize river and lake navigation. See endnote 1, above.
1. "Richmond Took a Beating," *Fortune Magazine*, February 1945, 267. This essay is adapted from part of the author's Ph.D. dissertation, "Women and Defense Industries in World War II" (University of California, Berkeley, 1993). I would like to thank Paula Fass, Leon Litwack, and Aihwa Ong for their encouragement and generous support for the project. Special thanks to Sucheng Chan, Paula Fass, Bryna Goodman, Him Mark Lai, and Nancy Quam-Wickam for their comments on earlier drafts of the paper, and to Maggie Gee, Peter Lew, Jade Snow Wong, and many other individuals who shared their life stories and who helped with my research.
2. *Fore 'N' Aft*, April 20, 1945. Marion Gee was the name used for Ah Yoke Gee in this source.
3. The Naturalization Act of 1790 limited naturalization to "free white persons" who had resided in the United States for at least two years. The Naturalization Act of 1870 extended this privilege to aliens of African nativity and persons of African descent. Chinese as well as other Asians, however, were excluded in these acts. The Circuit Court for California ruled in 1878 that Chinese, who were classified racially as Mongolians, were neither white nor African and thus ineligible for naturalization. This ruling was officially adopted by the U.S. government in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. For details on legal restrictions against Chinese immigrants and their court-tested implications, see Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle Against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1994), 70-73; Sucheng Chan, "The Exclusion of Chinese Women, 1870-1943," in Sucheng Chan, ed., *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 94-146; Jeff H. Lesser, "Always 'Outsiders': Asians, Naturalization, and the Supreme Court," *Amerasia* 12 (1985-86): 83-100; and Jack Chen, *The Chinese of America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1980), 147-48.
4. Act of September 22, 1922, 42 *United States Statutes at Large* (First Part) 1021; Chan, "The Exclusion of Chinese Women," 109.
5. Interview with Maggie Gee, February 20, 1994, and March 27, 1994; interview with Florence Gee Tom, August 23, 1994. Although the Chinese exclusion acts were repealed in 1943, it was not until 1952 that racially based denial of naturalization was abolished in the McCarran-Walter Act. According to her daughters, Ah Yoke was not aware of the changes in the naturalization laws until the late 1950s.
6. On women workers in World War II, see Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex during World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987); Sherna Berger Gluck, *Rosie the Riveter Revisited: Women, the War, and Social Change* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987); Sheila Tropp Lichtman, "Women at Work, 1941-1945: Wartime Employment in the San Francisco Bay Area" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Davis, 1981); and Miriam Frank, Marilyn Ziebarth, and Connie Field, *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter: The Story of Three Million Working Women During World War Two* (California: Clarity Educational Productions, 1982). Although these works include information on some minority women, none of them discusses the experience of Chinese American women. In her dissertation on wartime women shipyard workers, Deborah Ann Hirshfield concluded that not many Asians worked in the shipyards because Japanese Americans were interned during the war and "restrictions on the aliens' access to confidential Navy or Army plans discouraged most shipyards from hiring" Chinese Americans "in significant numbers." See Deborah Ann Hirshfield, "Rosie Also Welded: Women and Technology in Shipbuilding During World War II" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 1987), 127. Historian Charles Wollenberg, in his book on Marinship, pointed out that many Marinship workers came from local Chinese American communities. However, since very little could be found in English-language sources about Chinese American workers, his discussion on Chinese American women was limited. See Charles Wollenberg, *Marinship at War: Shipbuilding and Social Change in Wartime Sausalito* (Berkeley: Western Heritage Press, 1990).
7. *Time*, December 22, 1941.
8. *Jinshan shibao*, July 4, 5, 1942.
9. *Ibid.*, April 22, May 11, 20, 24, 30, June 20, 23, 24, August 12, 22, and November 16, 1942; March 1, 2, 17, April 13, 19, August 12, November 16, 1943.
10. In his survey of the African American population in San Francisco conducted in 1943, sociologist Charles S. Johnson found that before and up to 1943, "no rigidly segregated Negro community existed in the city." The Chinese population in the city, however, "represents a counterpart of the distinctly Negro district of New York's Harlem, Chicago's Southside Area, and Detroit's Paradise Valley." See Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro War Workers in San Francisco, A Local Self-Survey* (San Francisco, 1944), 3; *Jinshan shibao*, April 28, 1942, and March 17, 1943; *Chinese Press*, August 21, 1942.
11. See Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *The Chinese Experience in America* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986), 116.
12. Marshall Maslin, ed., *Western Shipbuilders in World War II* (Oakland, 1954), 59.
13. I found only one woman reportedly working in Kaiser Richmond shipyards who arrived in the United States from China during the war. Lena Chiang, a Yard Three plate-shop swing-shift shipfitter, according to a report in *Fore 'N' Aft*, was a second cousin of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the Chinese Nationalist Party.

Zhao, "Chinese American Women Defense Workers," pp. 138-153.

- Having graduated from a Chinese university, Lena left China in 1941 with her husband, Major Pei Lun Chiang. The major was injured during a Japanese air raid in Chongqing, China, and came to the United States to receive medical treatment. He then stayed for training at an American military school. Meanwhile, Lena, together with her brother Paul, joined the nation's defense work. See *Fore 'N' Aft*, July 1943.
14. *Chinese Press*, August 21, 1942.
  15. Although *Marinship's* first Liberty Ship was launched in late June of 1942, large-scale production work began only towards the end of the year, when major construction of the facility was completed. See Wollenberg, *Marinship at War*, 3-4; *Jinshan shibao*, March 21, 1943.
  16. Some of the workers, especially men, were employed by the defense industries for only a short period of time before they joined the Army.
  17. Stanford M. Lyman, *Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 1974), 59; Victor G. and Brett de Bary Nee, *Longtime Californi': A Documentary Study of An American Chinatown* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), 148-49. Early Chinese immigrants often raised their capital among themselves when they decided to start a business. For example, a group of ten men with twenty dollars apiece would form a *hui*. Each would then write on a piece of paper secretly the amount of interest he was willing to pay to have the first use of the \$200 available in the *hui*. The highest bidder got the money, which he could use to start a small business. When he gave the money back a month later, the next highest bidder got his turn. See Renqiu Yu, *To Save China, to Save Ourselves: The Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance of New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 10-11; Chen, *The Chinese of America*, 197-98.
  18. Nee and Nee, *Longtime Californi'*, 63; Roger Daniels, *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1988), 94-95; interview with Ben Fee by Ben Tong and Kathleen Chin, Oral History Project, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 3.
  19. According to the 1940 census, fifty-two percent of the Chinese American population in the United States and fifty-eight percent in the state of California were American-born.
  20. *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population: Characteristics of the Nonwhite Population by Race*, 5-6.
  21. This, however, is not apparent in the published U.S. census. The census of 1940 shows that only 25.7 percent of Chinese women fourteen years and older were in the labor force in San Francisco and Oakland, lower than the proportions of both white and black working women (32.4 and 41.3 percent, respectively). This is because there were not many Chinese American women employed steadily as factory hands. For those who took piecework home and those who worked in their family-owned small shops—a phenomenon that could be found everywhere in the streets of both San Francisco's and Oakland's Chinatowns—their work was not counted in the census.
  22. Jade Snow Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989), 6; interview with Jade Snow Wong, November 25, 1991. Also see Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Earner: An Analysis of Chinese-American Family Strategies," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (Feb. 1983): 39-41.
  23. Ginger Chih, "Immigration of Chinese Women to the U.S.A., 1900-1940" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Sarah Lawrence College, 1977), 27-28. In the late 1930s, there were eighty-four small factories in San Francisco's Chinatown, including forty-nine garment shops, seven shrimp shelling shops, three cigar shops, and twenty-six others. See *Saufanshi nugong shehui diaocha zhi shiqing* (Survey of Social Work Needs of the Chinese Population of San Francisco), California SFRA Project 2F 2-256, 1936, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1-2. On Chinatown workers, see Lyman, *Chinese Americans*, 154-55; Tsai, *The Chinese Experience in America*, 109-110; Judy Yung, "Unbinding the Feet, Unbinding their Lives: Social Change for Chinese Women in San Francisco, 1902-1945" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1990), 223. Judy Yung's dissertation has been revised and published as *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995). According to a survey made by the California State Employment Service in June 1938, the average monthly wage of the Chinese in San Francisco was \$70 or less per month. The women's income was much lower than men's. See Ruth Hall Whitefield, "Public Opinion and the Chinese Question in San Francisco, 1900-1947" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1947).
  24. *Chinese Press*, October 9, 1942.
  25. *Jinshan shibao*, February 9, 22, April 1, 1942; *Chinese Press*, January 30, 1942.
  26. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 17, 1943; *Jinshan shibao*, April 19, 20, 1943.
  27. *Saufanshi nugong shehui diaocha zhi shiqing*, 1:35-36; Nee and Nee, *Longtime Californi'*, 289; Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 165.
  28. Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 165; *Saufanshi nugong shehui diaocha zhi shiqing*, 3; interview with Mrs. F. J. Chin by Sharlene Chinn, 1977, in "Combined Asian American Recourse Oral History Project," Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1-9.
  29. Lucy Jen Huang, "The Chinese American Family," in Charles H. Mindel and Robert W. Habenstein, eds., *Ethnic Families in America* (New York: Elsevier, 1981), 124. In the early 1940s the idea of using public daycare facilities was new to the majority of working women. Although many female defense workers had difficulties in coping with their work and childcare, few used childcare facilities at the time. In fact, many childcare centers in Richmond, California, could not get full enrollment for that reason. In addition to avoiding the cost of childcare, women in general felt more comfortable leaving their relatives or someone they knew to take care of their children. See *Fore 'N' Aft*, Sept. 3, 1943.
  30. *Saufanshi nugong shehui diaocha zhi shiqing*, 3.
  31. I use the term "second-generation" in this essay to refer to children of Chinese immigrants who either came to the U.S. with their parents at a young age or were born in the United States.
  32. Four of the twenty-seven women, for various reasons, were not available for interviews, and I learned their stories from members of their families.
  33. *Chinese Press*, May 29, 1942.
  34. *Jinshan shibao*, Nov. 29, 1942.
  35. *Fore 'N' Aft*, Nov. 19, 1942.
  36. Interview with Maggie Gee, November 24, 1992.
  37. *Chinese Press*, Dec. 18, 1942.
  38. Private aviation classes were available for women during the war. One such training program, provided by the American Women's Volunteering Service, advertised in Chinese-language newspapers. The program offered classes on aviation, operation, radio, and geography. Women with training in basic arithmetic were qualified to take classes. See *Jinshan shibao*, June 7, 1942.
  39. *Fore 'N' Aft*, Dec. 31, 1942.
  40. *Fore 'N' Aft*, April 16, 1943, and April 14, 1944.
  41. Richard Kock Dare, "The Economic and Social Adjustment of the San Francisco Chinese for the Past Fifty Years" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1959), 20; interview with Jane F. Lee by Ben Tong and Kathleen Chin; interview with Maggie Gee, June 1991; Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 189.
  42. Interview with Aimei Chen, July 11, 1994.
  43. A "paper son" was an individual who claimed he or she was a child of a Chinese born in the U.S. Such claims became common after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire destroyed birth records of the city.
  44. Interview with Yulan Liu, January 8, 1993.
  45. Interview with Jade Snow Wong; Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 4-5, 12-15, 18, 29, 33, 52-55, 71, 73, 90, 92, 95, 109, 188-99.
  46. *Fore 'N' Aft*, April 20, 1945.
  47. Interview with Yulan Liu.
  48. Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 92-93, 189-91, 194-98.
  49. Interview with Joy Yee, August 18, 23, 1994.
  50. Interview with Yulan Liu, January 8, 1993.
  51. Interviews with Maggie Gee and Florence Gee.
  52. Interview with Maggie Gee; for information on Maggie Gee in WASPs, also see Vera S. Williams, *WASPs: Women At War Service Pilots of World War II* (Osceola, WI: Motorbooks International Publishers & Wholesalers, 1994), 24, 31, 54, 69, 76, 77, 115, 126, 129, 140, 144.



53. *Chinese Press*, September 29, 1943. Also see *Jinshan shibao*, September 9, 1943.
54. Constance Wong, "Marinship Chinese Workers Are Building Ships to Free Their Home Land," *Marin-cr* (June 26, 1943): 3. One of my male informants, who worked briefly in a Richmond shipyard during the war, also remembered seeing a couple of Chinese American women laborers in Richmond shipyards. Although he never talked to these women, he believed that they were immigrants with limited English skills; interview with Peter Lew, August 23, 1994.
55. At Alameda Naval Air Station, however, there were more than a dozen Chinese American girls from Oakland, and they often got together after work; interview with Joy Yee.
56. Interview with Aimei Chen; *Fore 'N' Aft*, April 7, 1944.
57. Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 94, 233-34, 237.
58. Interview with Jade Snow Wong, November 23, 1991; Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 236.
59. Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 237.
60. Interview with Lanfang Wong, August 20, 1994.
61. Interview with Yuqin Fu, August 19, 1994.
62. Interview with Peter Lew.
63. Interview with Joy Yee.
64. Interview with Maggie Gee; *Looking Back at Berkeley: A Pictorial History of a Diverse City* (Berkeley: Berkeley Book Committee of the Berkeley Historical Society, 1984), 28.
65. Interview with Aimei Chen.
66. *Ibid.*; interview with Lili Wong, August 10, 1994.
67. Interview with Maggie Gee.
68. Interview with Jade Snow Wong.
69. Interview with Maggie Gee.
70. Interview with Limin Wong, July 19, 1994.

## Tutorow, "A Tale of Two Hospitals," pp. 154-169.

1. On May 24, 1936, War Department General Order No. 3 gave the Presidio the official name Presidio of San Francisco. See U.S. War Department, *Compilation of War Department General Orders, Bulletins, and Circulars*, January 1, 1943. A complete collection of General Orders is in the U.S. Army History Military Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013.

The author wishes to thank Captain David Stanton of the Presidio Office of the Judge Advocate General for reading drafts and saving the writer from many an infelicitous expression. Thanks to Mrs. Jan Torbet of the Documents Room at the San Francisco Public Library for her diligence in tracking down several difficult-to-locate documents needed for this study. Also, thanks to Mrs. Evie Tutorow for reading and rereading *ad infinitum* drafts of the manuscript.

2. An Army budget representative recently contacted the author to verify the value of all Presidio lands. Her office was carrying its present value on its books as \$7.8 million. When I told her she could walk around that

much value every ten minutes on the PSF, and that a value in excess of \$3 billion would be more in life, she said that she did not even know what a number that large meant.

3. Severe earthquakes did serious damage to the Presidio in 1808, 1812, and 1813. For an excellent overview of the history of California earthquakes, see David Ritchie, *Superquake: Why Earthquakes Occur and When the Big One Will Hit Southern California* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1988), particularly Chapter 1, "California: The Earthquake State," 1-36.
4. These early events in California history are ably chronicled in John Walton Caughey, *California* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 112-34; and Walton Bean, *California, An Interpretive History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 34-49.
5. For literature on California and the Mexican War, see Norman E. Tutorow, *The Mexican-American War: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981).
6. "An Act for the Admission of the State of California into the Union," *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 31st Cong., 1st Sess., Vol. 9, Chap. 50, September 9, 1850, pp. 452-53.
7. A copy of this Executive Order is in the Presidio Historical Files, cited hereinafter as PHF. See *CIS Index to Presidential Executive Orders & Proclamations: Chronological List* (Washington: Congressional Information Service, 1987), Microfiche 1850-41-1. Also, see U.S. War Department, *Outline Description of Military Posts and Reservations in the United States and Alaska* (Washington: GPO, 1904), 379.
8. A copy of this Executive Order is in the PHF; *CIS Index*, Microfiche 1851-41-5. One must look to Fort Mason and Fort Miley to track the history of this departed parcel. On March 3, 1855, a \$300,000 appropriation was made by Congress for the construction of Castillo de San Joaquin and Fort Point. *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 33rd Cong., 2nd Sess., Vol. 10, Chap. 171, p. 640.
9. "An Act for the Relief of Sick and Disabled Seamen," *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 5th Cong., 2nd Sess., Vol. 1, Chap. 72, July 16, 1798, pp. 605-606. For an outline of the early history of the Marine Hospital Service, and an explanation of fees, see *Annual Report of the Supervising Surgeon of the Marine-Hospital Service of the United States for the fiscal year 1873* (Washington: GPO, 1873), 8-9. Although the title varies, it will be cited hereinafter as *Annual Report*. The various marine hospitals provided their patients with welfare, social services, and medical care. There were circulating libraries of books and magazines, and provisions of clothing, stationery, and financial assistance for the indigent. In the early years of the twentieth century, entertainment was provided by movies, pool tables, pianos, radios, and games (card games were not permitted!); *Annual Report*, 1927, p. 263. For definitions of "care" and "maintenance," which required that seamen be given food and lodging as well as medical care, see Henry Campbell Black, *Black's Law*

*Dictionary* (4th ed., St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1951).

10. John Godfrey, "Historical Sketch of the United States Marine-Hospital Service at San Francisco, Cal.," in *Annual Report*, 1896, pp. 277-79.
11. Treasury Department Records, Marine Hospitals, No. 2, p. 146. Cited in Godfrey, "Historical Sketch," 277.
12. *Cong. Globe, App.* (31st Congress, 1st Sess.), p. 1351, and *U.S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. 9, Chap. 90, p. 534. Several California statutes had been adopted for a state marine hospital, even before the federal institution was created. Calling itself a state, long before statehood became a reality, the legislature, on April 9, 1850, adopted "An Act Providing for the Creation of a Marine Hospital for the State of California." The hospital was to be in San Francisco, *Laws of the State of California*, 1st Sess., Chap. 65, pp. 164-67. This law was amended on April 22, 1850; *ibid.*, Chap. 126, p. 343. These and subsequent acts were repealed by "An Act to amend 'An Act to Provide a Revenue for the State Marine Hospital at San Francisco,' passed March twenty-sixth, eighteen hundred and fifty-one," *Statutes of California*, 3rd Sess., Chap. 6, pp. 45-46. All laws pertaining to the proposed marine hospital (which was never built), were repealed on May 17, 1853, by "An Act to Abolish the present State Hospitals, and to provide for liquidating the Indebtedness of the same." Section 204 of this act specifically repealed by name and date five laws pertaining to the proposed marine hospital, *Compiled Laws of the State of California, Containing all the Acts of the Legislature of a Public and General Nature, Now in Force, Passed at the Sessions of 1850-51-52-53*, Chap. 204, pp. 926-27. On May 19, 1853, the California Legislature adopted "An Act to provide for the Establishment of a State Hospital at San Francisco, and to provide for the Indigent Sick in this State," *ibid.*, Chap. 214, pp. 938-44, and *Statutes of California*, 4th Sess., Chap. 179, pp. 281-87. This hospital was built on Filbert Street between Stockton and Powell. See Ralph Chester Williams, *The United States Public Health Service, 1798-1950* (Washington: United States Public Health Service, 1951), 45-46, cited hereinafter as Williams, *USPHS*. Also, see *The United States Public Health and Marine Hospital Service* (Chicago: Press of the American Medical Association, 1904).
13. Godfrey, "Historical Sketch," 278.
14. *First Annual Report*, 1872, p. 17.
15. Godfrey, "Historical Sketch," 278. The first Presidio building dedicated to the healing arts was a 28-bed post hospital completed in January 1857 near the main parade grounds, in a building whose reconstructed remains now house the Presidio Museum. This makeshift hospital was destroyed by fire and was replaced in 1864 by Wright Hospital. To accommodate the wounded returning from the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, in 1898 a 368-bed hospital was completed near the Lombard Gate. In the following year, it was desig-

- nated a U.S. General Hospital, and on November 23, 1911, was renamed Letterman General Hospital, by War Department General Order 152, in honor of Major Jonathan Letterman, who organized the Medical Department of the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War. An area of forty-eight acres (later increased to fifty-six) was set aside to accommodate growth and ancillary facilities. Letterman Army Medical Center (LAMC), a 550-bed hospital and specialized treatment facility, was completed in 1969, to make Letterman the Army's largest hospital west of the Mississippi. Letterman Army Institute of Research (LAIR) was added in 1974.
16. *Annual Report*, 1872, p. 17.
17. Godfrey, "Historical Sketch," 278.
18. *Ibid.*, 279.
19. *Annual Report*, 1872, p. 17, and *Annual Report*, 1875, p. 27.
20. Godfrey, "Historical Sketch," 279.
21. *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 42nd Cong., 3rd Sess., Vol. 17, Chap. 72, January 28, 1873, pp. 420-21.
22. *Ibid.*
23. William Belknap, Secretary of War, to the Secretary of the Treasury, January 24, 1874. Also, see SacDist Corps of Engineers, "Cultural Resources Inventory: Update, Presidio of San Francisco" (1988), 95-96; and Workers of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects [sic] Administration in Northern California (compilers), "The Army of the Golden Gate: A Guide to Army Posts in the San Francisco Bay Area," typescript, no date; and Erwin N. Thompson and Sally B. Woodbridge, *Presidio of San Francisco: An Outline of Its Evolution as a U.S. Army Post, 1847-1990* (Denver: National Park Service, 1992), copies in PHF.
24. George B. Davis, Judge Advocate General, to Adjutant General, April 13, 1909. Copy of letter in War Department, Office of Chief of Engineers, was sent to Engineer's Office Department of California, March 2, 1910, copy in PHF.
25. U.S. Treasury Department, *Annual Report on the State of the Finances to the 43rd Congress, First Session, Dec. 1, 1873* (Washington: GPO, 1873), 687.
26. *Outline Description of Military Posts*, p. 378. The *San Francisco Examiner* of January 24, 1974, in "Looking Back a Century," reported that on January 22, 1874, the War Department had accepted setting aside a portion of the Presidio for a marine hospital.
27. Godfrey, "Historical Sketch," 279. U.S. Treasury Department, *Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1875* (Washington: GPO, 1875), 626, excerpted from the "Report of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury."
28. *Outline Description of Military Posts*, p. 379.
29. *Ibid.*, 380.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Daily Alta California*, April 7, 1870.
32. Ferdinand von Leuch, *Plan of the Pueblo Lands of San Francisco: Finally Confirmed to the City of San Francisco, Surveyed under Instructions from the U.S. Surveyor General* (San Francisco: Schmidt Label and Litho Co., 1887).
33. Ernest Hebersmith to the Surgeon General, U.S. Marine Hospital Service, Washington, D.C., July 7, 1881, copy in PHF.
34. General Irvin McDowell to Adjutant General, September 22, 1881, in War Department Files, No. 72, copy in PHF.
35. General Irvin McDowell to Adjutant General, February 24, 1881, in War Department Files, No. 73. This was just part of an ongoing dispute between McDowell and Hebersmith that was reflected in the general's earlier refusal to allow the hospital to pave its access road. Ernest Hebersmith to General Irvin McDowell, December 11, 1880, in Marine Hospital Correspondence, File 73, copy in PHF.
36. Document 735 of Reservation Files of 1884 contains a synopsis of the complaint about the fence, written by Major General John Pope, commanding, Department of California, and various hospital responses and explanations, copy in PHF.
37. Dr. John Vansant, Marine Hospital Custodian, to Commanding General [John Pope], Presidio of San Francisco, August 8, 1884, copy in PHF.
38. Dr. John Vansant to the Supervising Surgeon General, U.S. Marine Hospital Service, Washington, D.C., April 8, 1884, discusses at great length various conflicts between the Army and the Marine Hospital as well as the water supplies used by the hospital and the "Presidio Reserve." Also, see Surgeon General John B. Hamilton to Secretary of the Treasury Charles J. Folger, April 25, 1884, copy in PHF.
39. SacDist, Corps of Engineers, "Cultural Resources," 96-97; *Alta California*, February 24, 1874, quoting Secretary of War William Belknap, copy in the PHF.
40. Presidio of San Francisco, California, October 25, 1882, Special Orders No. 173, copy in PHF.
41. Dr. John Vansant to the Supervising Surgeon General, U.S. Marine Hospital Service, Washington, April 8, 1884, copy in PHF.
42. Williams, *USPHS*, 121. This new hotel opened in 1860. In an 1864 advertisement, it was shown as a beautiful five-story building at the corner of Jackson and Dupont streets, having one hundred beautiful rooms. *San Francisco Business Directory and Mercantile Guide for 1864-1865* (San Francisco: B.F. Stilwell & Co., 1864). A less flattering description, depicting it at the time of the plague, says it was a three-story, rat-infested structure at the corner of Jackson and Grant (in 1886 Dupont was renamed Grant), having sixty rooms, with eight by ten-foot cubicles in which fifteen "Chinamen" slept in bunks stacked all the way to the ten-foot ceiling, housing each night between eight hundred and a thousand men. Charles Caldwell Dobie, *San Francisco's Chinatown* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936), 237. After the fire of 1906, there was a Globe Hotel listed in the City Directory at 192 O'Farrell Street.
- This was the first case in North America of a plague that had occurred in several worldwide pandemics. The first case of the plague in the New World was in Brazil, in 1891. Loren G. Lipson, "Plague in San Francisco: The United States Marine Hospital Service Commission to Study the Existence of Plague in San Francisco," *Annals of Internal Medicine* 77 (July-December 1972): 303. See Walter Wyman, *The Bubonic Plague* (Washington: GPO, 1900), this fifty-page document was also published as Treasury Department Document 2165, Public Health Bulletin No. 7.
43. *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 20.
44. *Annual Report*, 1900, pp. 19-22. This report contains a full narration of events following the discovery of plague in San Francisco as well as the text of more than fifty telegrams sent by and to local authorities and to Surgeon General Walter Wyman.
45. *Annual Report*, 1901, p. 16.
46. This policy was discontinued on March 28, and was resumed again on May 19, *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 21.
47. Lipson, "Plague," 303.
48. *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 20; Lipson, "Plague," 305.
49. *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 20.
50. Telegram, Joseph J. Kinyoun to Surgeon General Walter Wyman, May 15, 1900, in *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 537.
51. *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 20. The battle over whether there was in fact any genuine incidence of the plague in San Francisco is well chronicled by Lipson, "Plague," 304-305.
52. Wilfred H. Kellogg, "Present Status of Plague, with Historic Review," *American Journal of Public Health* 10 (November 1920): 835-44.
53. Williams, *USPHS*, 137.
54. *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 22. The approximate population of Chinatown at the time was 18,000 Chinese and 1,800 Japanese, Lipson, "Plague," 304.
55. *Annual Report*, 1901, pp. 502-516.
56. On June 14, 1900.
57. *Annual Report*, 1900, pp. 22-23.
58. Lipson, "Plague," 305.
59. *San Francisco Board of Health Biennial Report 1898-1900* (San Francisco: Hinton Printing Company, 1900), 13.
60. "First Biennial Message of Governor Henry T. Gage," in *Appendix to Journals of Senate and Assembly of California*, 34th Sess., Vol. 1, January 7, 1901, pp. 3-44. The "Bubonic Plague Scare" is on pp. 7-18.
61. The commissioners were professors Simon Flexner of the University of Pennsylvania, Llewellys F. Barker of the University of Chicago, and Frederick G. Novy of the University of Michigan. *Annual Report*, 1901, pp. 15-16; Williams, *USPHS*, 124.
62. *Annual Report*, 1901, pp. 502-516.
63. One might almost think that Thomas Mann found the underlying theme of *Der Tod in Venedig* (*Death in Venice*) in this San Francisco episode.
64. "An act to add a new section to the Political Code of the State of California relating to the preservation of public health." *Statutes*



- of California, 34th Sess., Chap. 85, March 6, 1901, p. 99.
65. Lipson, "Plague," 309.
66. See Williams, *USPHS*, 121ff.
67. *Annual Report*, 1908, pp. 11-12.
68. *Annual Report*, 1909, p. 11. In 1908, San Francisco boasted itself as "One of the Healthiest Cities in the World," having a mortality rate from all contagious diseases of less than two per thousand of population; Frank Morton Todd, *Eradicating Plague from San Francisco* (San Francisco: Report of Citizens' Health Committee, 1909), frontispiece. This is a "Report of the Citizens' Health Committee and an Account of its Work."
69. *Annual Report*, 1909, p. 14.
70. In that year there were 4,781,135 rat poisons placed, 146,809 rats were trapped, 9,250 were found dead, and 93,558 were examined bacteriologically. *Annual Report*, 1909, p. 13.
71. *Annual Report*, 1917, p. 214.
72. *Annual Report*, 1922, p. 95; *Annual Report*, 1923, pp. 68-69.
73. *Annual Report*, 1925, p. 67. In all, there were epidemics in California in 1900, 1906, 1919, and 1924, Lipson, "Plague," 309.
74. *Annual Report*, 1898, p. 59.
75. In letter dated September 4, 1894, in *Annual Report*, 1895, p. 30.
76. *Annual Report*, 1907, pp. 86-87; *Alta California*, February 21, 1874, quoting Secretary of War William Belknap.
77. *Annual Report*, 1921, p. 300.
78. *Annual Report*, 1926, p. 232.
79. *Annual Report*, 1924, p. 216; *Annual Report*, 1925, p. 215.
80. *Annual Report*, 1925, p. 214.
81. The variety of services provided is reflected in the following excerpt from the *Annual Report* for 1926, p. 232: "An average of 30 men a month, chiefly those rejoining ships after illness, are provided with clothing. Last year 25 patients were sent to the Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, an institution devoted to the care of veteran seamen who require custodial care. The Knights of Columbus and various other organizations continue to distribute cigarettes, toilet articles, etc., for the comfort of all patients."
82. *Annual Report*, 1927, p. 262. *U.S. Statutes at Large* [Public Law 69-744], 69th Cong., 2nd Sess., Vol. 44 (Part 2), Chap. 341, March 3, 1927, pp. 1378-79.
83. *Annual Report*, 1927, p. 262.
84. *Annual Report*, 1928, p. 259.
85. *Annual Report*, 1929, p. 243. *U.S. Statutes at Large* [Public Law 93], 70th Cong., 1st Sess., Vol. 45, Chap. 126, pp. 162-93, p. 181 cited.
86. *Annual Report*, 1930, p. 262; the *Annual Report* of 1931 gives this date as April 7, 1930.
87. *Annual Report*, 1931, p. 254.
88. *Annual Report*, 1931, p. 254; *U.S. Statutes at Large* [Public Law 869], 71st Cong., 3rd Sess., Vol. 46 (Part 1), Chap. 522, pp. 1552-1627, p. 1601 cited.
89. *Annual Report*, 1932, p. 148.
90. Buildings of the old hospital complex that still stand are now numbered 1807 (built in 1920), 1809 (1920), and 1810 (1915).
91. *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 76th Cong., 1st Sess., Vol. 53 (Part 2), Sect. 201, Reorganization Plan No. 1, July 1, 1939, pp. 1424-25.
92. The original request was for four acres. Alan W. Donaldson, acting chief, Communicable Disease Center, to post engineer, Presidio of San Francisco, August 15, 1962. The final transfer was made under authority given the General Services Administration (GSA) by the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 by letter from Creed B. Card, chief, Real Estate Department, SacDist Corps of Engineers, and accepted on October 31, 1964, by Rufus E. Miles, Jr., of HEW, copy in PHF.
93. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, Title IX, Health Services and Facilities, Subtitle J, Closure of Public Health Service Hospitals. *U.S. Statutes at Large* [Public Law 97-35], Vol. 95, 97th Cong., 2nd Sess., August 13, 1981, pp. 602-605.
94. A copy of this letter is in PHF.
95. *U.S. Statutes at Large* [Public Law 92-589], Vol. 86, 92nd Cong., 2nd Sess., October 27, 1972, pp. 1511-16, established the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), which included the PSF within its boundaries. The former PHSH area was specifically excluded. See Boundary Map number NRA-GG-80.003, sheets 1-3, July 1972, copy of map is in PHF.
96. Ronald D. Hofman, acting state director, Bureau of Land Management, to C.A. Patterson, HEW, November 5, 1981, copy in PHF.
97. David C. Gray, director of real estate, Department of the Army, to SacDist Corps of Engineers, March 9, 1984, copy in PHF.
98. Colonel Eugene D. Hawkins, garrison commander, to U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), Fort McPherson, Georgia, September 21, 1982, copy in PHF.
99. GSA Control No. F-CA-950-A, with ten endorsements, copy in PHF.
100. Joseph Duncan, chief, Acquisition Branch, to Jake Ours, GSA, December 1, 1982, copy in PHF.
101. Howard W. Ours, GSA Disposal Branch, Real Estate Division, San Francisco Regional Office, to Joseph Duncan, chief, Acquisition Branch, Sacramento District, Corps of Engineers, January 19, 1983, copy in PHF.
102. Morgan Wheeler, chief, Real Estate Division, SacDist Corps of Engineers, to CDR USACE (DAEN-REA), Washington, D.C., January 25, 1983, copy in PHF.
103. Morgan Wheeler, Request for Transfer of Real and Related Personal Property (Form 1334), to GSA, San Francisco, January 25, 1983. Harry S. Hanashiro, SacDist Corps of Engineers appraiser, April 5, 1983, copy in PHF.
104. Max E. Follmer, chief, Acquisition Division, to Commander, FORSCOM, Ft. McPherson, Georgia, December 5, 1983, copy in PHF.
105. Morgan Wheeler, chief, Real Estate Division, SacDist Corps of Engineers, to Commander, Headquarters, PSF, February 7, 1984. Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Edgerton, Directorate of Engineering and Housing (DEH) [now Directorate of Public Works (DPW)], PSF, to FORSCOM, January 9, 1984, copy in PHF.
106. Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Edgerton, DEH, to SacDist Corps of Engineers, January 25, 1984, copy in PHF.
107. James F. McCabe, Jr., supervisory regional appraiser, GSA, to Director, Disposal Division, June 21, 1984, copy in PHF.
108. "Portion" had been part of the PSF until transferred to the PHSH in 1964. The Army had insisted upon a reverter clause, in keeping with the clause in the 1927 transfer, but the GSA—the real estate "broker" handling the transaction—refused to include one. Colonel Howard D. Graves, deputy chief of staff, Engineers, to HQDA (DAEN-ZCI-A), Washington, D.C., January 28, 1984, copy in PHF.
109. Gwendolyn M. Cornell, director, Real Property Disposal Division, GSA, San Francisco, to Morgan Wheeler, chief, Real Property Division, SacDist Corps of Engineers, May 21, 1984, copy in PHF.
110. Max E. Follmer, chief, Acquisition Division, SacDist Corps of Engineers, to Office of Chief of Engineers, Washington, May 29, 1984, copy in PHF.
111. Gwendolyn M. Cornell to Joseph C. Duncan, acting chief, Real Estate Division, SacDist Corps of Engineers, August 1, 1984, copy in PHF.
112. The land was returned to the Army by letter from Secretary Lowell Schweiker to the secretary of the army on November 5, 1981. To summarize the 1800-area acreage: Approximately 86 acres were leased to the Treasury Department in 1874 for a marine hospital. Federal law in 1927 returned more than half the area to the Army and transferred "ownership" of 35.05 acres to the Treasury Department. Thus, 35.05 acres minus .565 acres quitclaimed to the state of California in 1928 equals 34.485 acres plus 1.99 acres given to the hospital by the Army in 1964 (and returned in 1984) equals 36.475 acres.
113. National Defense Authorization Act. *U.S. Statutes at Large* [Public Law 100-180], Vol. 101, 100th Cong., 1st Sess., December 4, 1987, pp. 1019-1248. The relevant portion, Section 2331, Title III, pp. 1222-23, is also found in *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989*, House of Representatives, *House Reports*, 100th Cong., 1st Sess. (Report 100-446), pp. 212-13.
114. Building 1827. An estimate made in the fall of 1993 for demolishing this less-than-1,000-square-foot, single-story, dilapidated old frame building and remediating the toxic contamination was \$400,000. The building has since been demolished.
115. "Jack is At Rest: The Secluded Cemetery for Sailors Among the Presidio Hills," *San Francisco Call*, March 29, 1896.
116. In the "Enhanced Preliminary Assessment Report: Presidio of San Francisco Military Reservation, San Francisco, California EPA, November 1989," by U.S. Army Toxic and Hazardous Materials Agency (THAMA),

- Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland. Other environmental investigations for remediation action for PHSL land are found in the December 1992 "Final Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS)" for the PHSL Hospital, copy in PHF.
117. An excellent historical sketch of the beginnings of the Marine Hospital cemetery is in Mary L. Maniery, *Summary of the San Francisco Marine Hospital Cemetery, Presidio of San Francisco, California* (Sacramento: Par Environmental Services, 1994), 8, 12-15.
118. The number of graves is about six hundred, Maniery, *Summary*, 11.
119. Including 50,000-gallon and 35,000-gallon water tanks numbered Building 4, demolished in 1977, and several concrete shells of former buildings.
120. Buildings 1801-1803, 1805-1806, 1809-1815, and 1818-1820.
121. The historical evaluation and documentation are contained in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Base Closure of the Presidio and in the Final Cultural Resources Inventory Update, 1991, SacDist Corps of Engineers, copy in PHF.
122. These "outgrants" provide for immediate termination at the discretion of the secretary of the army, should a military need for the facilities arise.
123. This use was authorized by the garrison commander of the Presidio of San Francisco, and continued until July 1994, copy in PHF.
124. A "Transfer and Acceptance of Military Real Property" Form 1354 was signed on September 8, 1994, by the Fort Lewis real property officer.
125. *Federal Register* 59 (188) September 29, 1994, 49711.
126. Togo D. West, Jr. to Bruce Babbitt, September 30, 1994.
127. *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 24, 1995.
128. U.S. Department of the Interior, *Creation of a Park for the 21st Century from Military Post to National Park: Final General Management Plan Amendment, Presidio of San Francisco* (San Francisco: National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1994), 80-83.
129. *Ibid.*, vi. At this writing, the area is still a no-man's land, no longer a hospital, never really part of an Army post, and not yet a functioning part of the National Park Service. Whatever the future holds, this chameleon-like area, lying on a beautiful hill overlooking the Pacific Ocean, will be in a position to serve its neighbors, its clients, and its tourists and visitors, from near and far.

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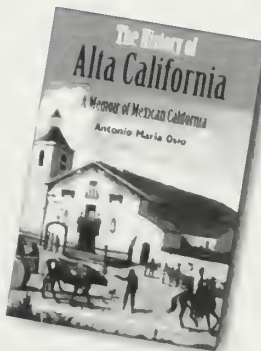
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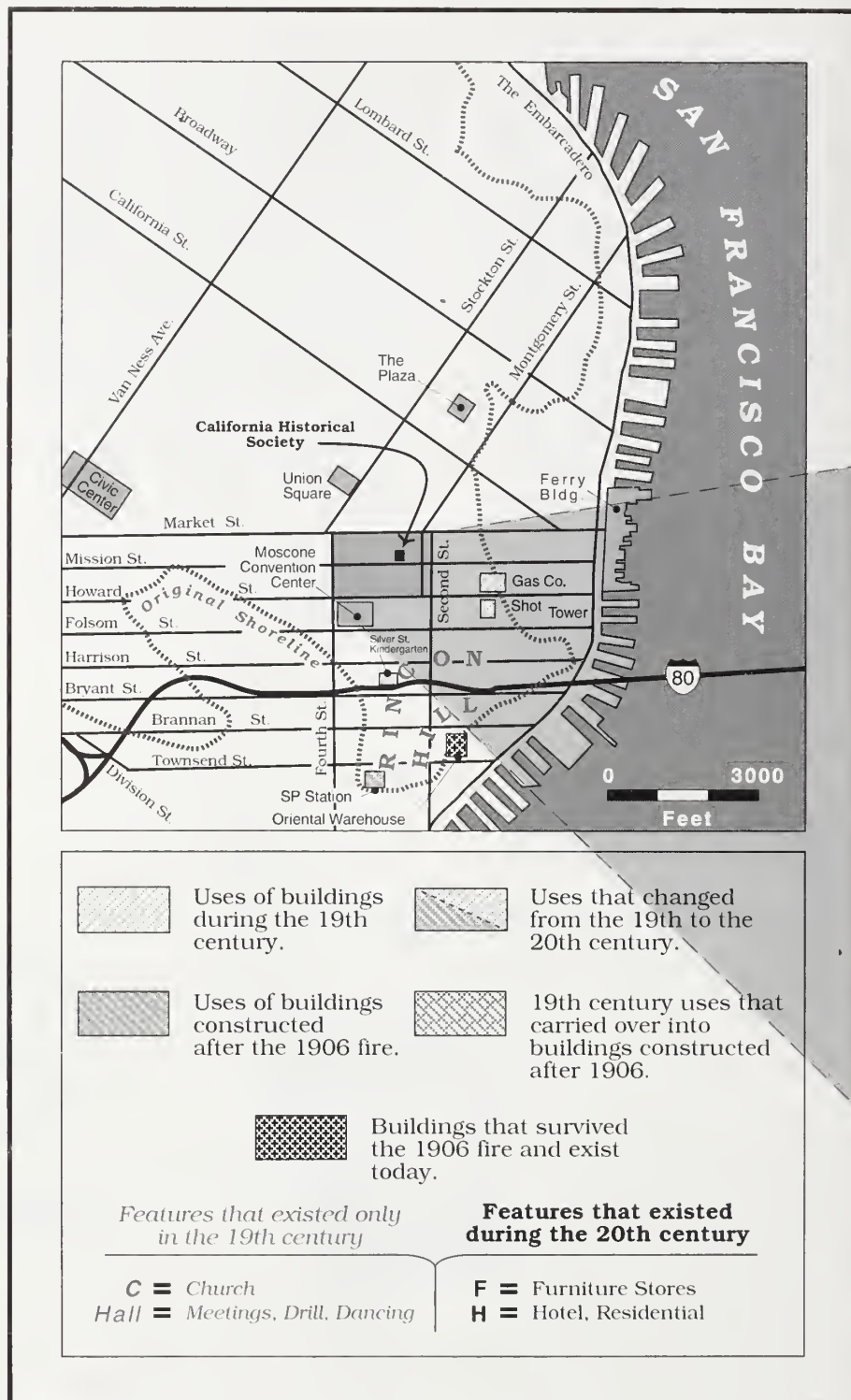


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# Corrections

A software meltdown resulted in a scrambling of the legend to the "Historical Map of the California Historical Society's New Neighborhood" (Winter 1995/96, p. 374). The corrected San Francisco map and legend appear here, and readers are asked to xerox this version and superimpose it over the inaccurate one in the Winter issue.



Author and archivist Lynn Downey notes that corrected milestone dates in the caption identifying Levi Strauss (Spring 1996, p. 30) are his birth in 1829 and his arrival in San Francisco in 1853, which are incorrectly given as 1830 and 1850 in James Hart's *A Companion to California*. Photograph captions identifying Joseph Rickard, Bernice Harrison, Yvonne Miller, and Theodore Crum, of the First Negro Classic Ballet (Spring 1996, p. 82-83), are reversed. The photograph on page 83 shows Rickard and Harrison rehearsing in 1952. Also, the opening date of the new California State Archives building is 1995, not 1955 as incorrectly written in the caption (Spring 1996, p. 11).

The editors and designer regret these errors.

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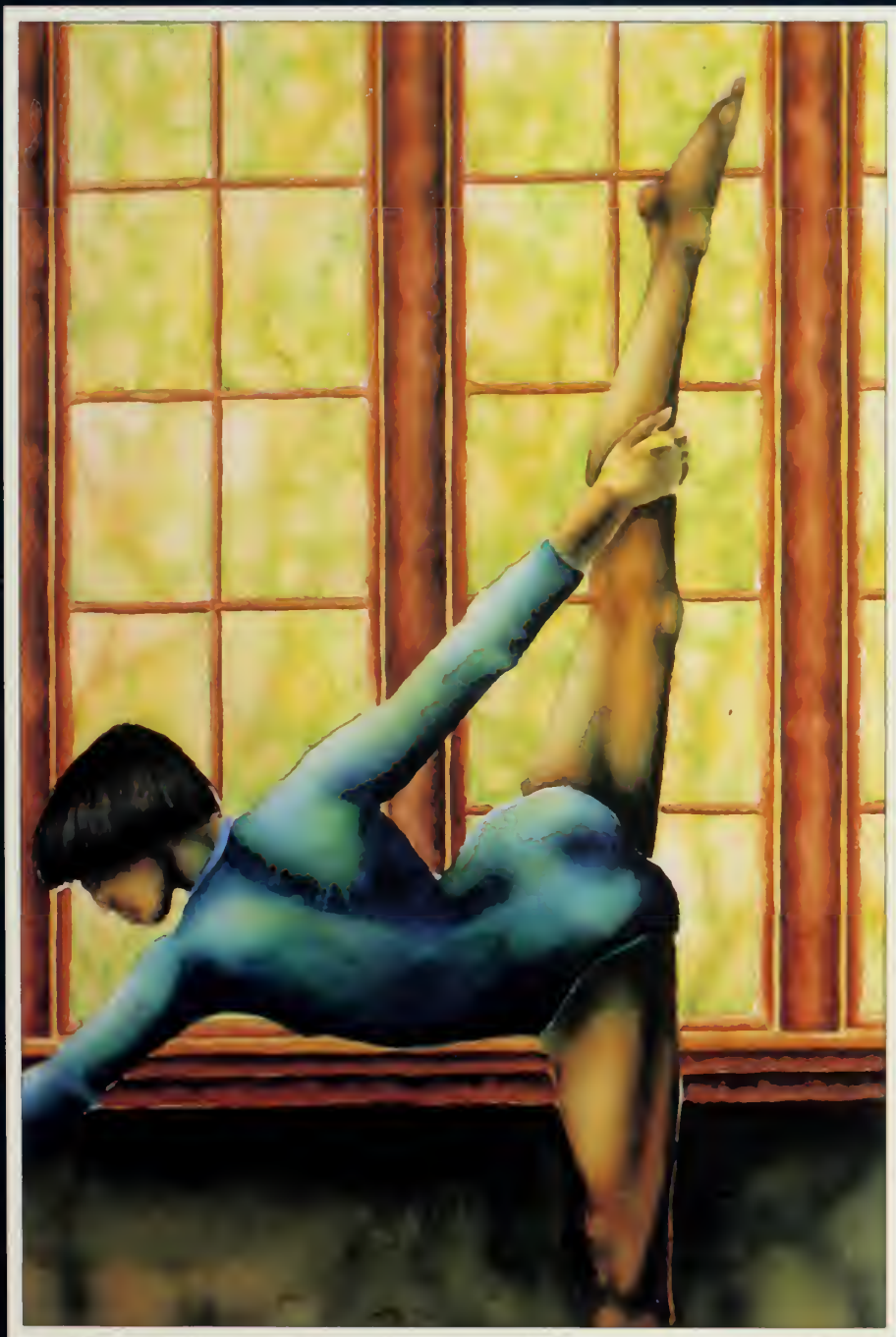
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THE MAGAZINE OF THE CALIFORNIA

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# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

FALL 1996



*African Americans in California*

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## Historical Agencies—

### Three California Repositories of African American History and Heritage

The **California African-American Museum (CAAM)**, Los Angeles, began operation in 1981 as one of the first state-mandated museums of its kind in the nation. Located in Exposition Park, the California African-American Museum has as its primary goal the collection and preservation of artifacts documenting the African American experience. The museum's exhibitions and public programs focus on contributions made by people of African descent to the arts, humanities, and science. In so doing, the museum aids in the recovery of African American history and provides a continuous source of knowledge and encouragement for future generations.

RICK MOSS, Program Manager  
California African-American Museum



In many African cultures, the Griot (crier) serves as the collective memory, historian, storyteller, and transmitter of culture to successive generations. This is the **San Francisco African-American Historical and Cultural Society's** function in the African American community and for the greater San Francisco Bay Area community. Its library, museum, and programs are repositories of heritage. During 1995, AAHCS celebrated forty years of preserving and promoting African American history and culture for people of African descent and others in the community. Located in Fort Mason, the society has done this through walking tours; by sponsoring historical field trips; through poetry and history workshops, publications, and lectures at its library in the Center for Africa and African American Culture (CAAAC); and through its museums or those of others. For example, the society recently lent its collection of artifacts on Mary Ellen Pleasant, mother of civil rights in California, to the State Capitol museum for its current exhibit on California's pioneering women.

TONY POWELL, Museum Curator  
San Francisco African-American  
Historical and Cultural Society



The mission of the **African American Museum and Library at Oakland** is to discover, collect, preserve, interpret, exhibit and share the experiences of African Americans in California and the West. Special emphasis is placed on the experiences of African Americans in northern California and the east bay. The organization was founded in 1965 by a small group of local pioneers interested in preserving African American history. In 1994 the museum and library merged with the Oakland Public Library. With many thousands of historical photographs, special collections, newspapers, oral histories, and personal papers, including those of political and social activists, AAMLO is a major repository for historical and archival materials. Special publications include books on Delilah Beasley and a history of east bay African Americans, a quarterly newsletter, and most recently, a black history engagement calendar.

ROBERT L. HAYNES, Senior Curator  
African American Museum and  
Library at Oakland

---

FRONT COVER: Linden Keiffer, *Balance*, 1996, watercolor, 11 x 17 in. *Courtesy of the artist.* Born on April 15, 1964, in Needles, California, Keiffer makes his home in the Bay Area. He received his B.A. in studio art and psychology from Arizona State University. His paintings, in oil, watercolor, and pastels, often display political, social, and religious issues. He uses his work to demonstrate the importance of racial diversity, religious and family structure, and the universal need for harmony. BACK COVER: Sargent Johnson (1887–1967), *Singing Saints*, 1940, lithograph, 13 x 10 in. *Courtesy of the Evans-Tibbs Collection, Washington, D.C.* An article by Joe Louis Moore in this issue discusses the work of artist Sargent Johnson.

# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

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The Freeman family, Richmond, California, ca. 1919. From left to right are Walter Freeman, Jr., Walter Freeman, Sr., and Jessie Freeman. *Author's collection.*

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# African Americans in California: A Brief Historiography

by Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, Consulting Editor

The articles presented in this special edition of *California History* examine the nature, scope, and significance of the African American presence in California. The authors of these works show that the African Americans who helped shape California's history were not passive, helpless victims, but active, determined men and women who, in a variety of ways, insisted on and achieved to a remarkable degree, self-determination and self-definition in the Golden State.

Prior to World War II, African Americans comprised about one percent of California's total population. The 1910 census set the state's black numbers at almost 22,000 in a total population of 2.3 million. World War II was the catalyst that caused California's black population to increase dramatically and continue to rise over the next decades. However, the African American presence in California actually stretches back to the days of Spanish conquest, Mexican rule, and pre-Civil War settlement.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the long record of black involvement and achievement in California, most early histories of the state rendered black Californians virtually invisible, focused on isolated individuals, or discussed African Americans only within the recent historical context of World War II population growth. It is not surprising, then, that some of the first chroniclers of African American history in California were black Californians. The most prominent of the early black California historians was Ohio native and long-time California resident Delilah Beasley. A self-taught historian, Beasley became one of the most well known African American women in the state and the first to attempt a comprehensive history of contemporary and pioneer black Californians. Her groundbreaking *Negro Trail-Blazers of California*, published in 1919, highlighted African American "firsts" and

individual achievements in an effort to give the "race better opportunities." Beasley predicated her work on the belief that history belonged to African Americans "just as much as it belonged to the white protagonists who dominated its pages." Her attempts to correct the historical record placed her in the ranks of academically trained historians like Carter G. Woodson, W.E.B. DuBois, and John Hope Franklin.<sup>2</sup>

For approximately the next forty years the story of black Californians was told primarily in the pages of African American newspapers like the *California Eagle*, the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, and the *California Voice*, in occasional articles printed in scholarly journals devoted to the study of African American history and culture, and in a scattering of academic papers and dissertations. However, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, in response to a growing demand by African Americans for historical inclusiveness, the emergence of black pride movements, and the development of African American studies programs in California universities, new trends in scholarship on the black California experience began to emerge. The new historical works, like Beasley's earlier book, were primarily surveys chronicling the contributions of African Americans to California's history. Kenneth G. Goode's *California's Black Pioneers: A Brief Historical Survey*, published in 1974, for example, provided a broad overview of African American history in the state, beginning with the Spanish period and concluding with the political, social, and cultural achievements of black Californians through the early 1970s. Similarly, Rudolph Lapp's *Blacks in Gold Rush California* focused on African Americans as significant actors in one of the most pivotal events in the state's (and the nation's) history.<sup>3</sup>

By the late 1970s, 1980s, and continuing in the





Journalist, leader of women's rights, and historian of black Americans, Delilah Leontium Beasley (1871–1934) made her home in northern California for nearly twenty-five years. Although much of her life remains an untold story, after the publication of *Negro Trail-Blazers of California*, she became a regular columnist for the *Oakland Tribune*, where she strove to advance interracial cooperation. Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.

1963," and Albert S. Broussard's *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900–1954*, and others moved away from the corrective and survey approach. Rather, these works have undertaken the examination of specific black California communities that emerged before, during, and after World War II. Moreover, recent scholarship has begun to explore the experiences of blacks residing in rural communities outside the state's urbanized population centers. This new direction has also placed significant emphasis on and exploration of culture as a means of economic and political empowerment. Scholars of the black experience in California have begun to examine a variety of African American cultural expressions in their analyses of economic, political, and social dynamics and community-formation in the Golden State.<sup>4</sup>

The articles in this issue continue the current trend in scholarship of African American history of California. Clarence Caesar's essay on black Sacramentans provides an insightful demographic analysis of African American community-building and expansion in the state's capital. Susan Bragg's examination of African Americans' fight for the integration of Sacramento's public school system in the nineteenth century complements Caesar's offering. Her analysis of strategies employed by these African Americans illustrate the agency and political sophistication of the early black Californians who made education the cornerstone of their community-building efforts.

Similarly, the articles by Rick Moss and Josh Sides on African Americans in Los Angeles underscore the integral role that blacks have played in southern California's development. These two articles about African Americans in California's principal city detail the far-reaching economic, political, and social consequences of wartime black migration and the erosion of racial discrimination that resulted from it. Essays by Carol Chamberland, Michael Fried, and Joe Louis Moore expand our knowledge about the role and function of African American cultural and social institutions in western black communities. Their examinations of African American visual and musical arts help preserve a vital portion of our history that otherwise might be lost.

1990s, scholars of African American history turned their attention to the diverse ethnic and racial groups in the cities and towns of the Far West. Works like Eleanor Mason Ramsey's "Allensworth: A Study in Social Change," Keith E. Collins's *Black Los Angeles: The Maturing of the Ghetto, 1940–1950*, Douglas Daniels's *Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco*, Shirley Ann Wilson Moore's "To Place Our Deeds: The African American Community in Richmond, California, 1910–

All the works presented in this volume of *California History* provide insight into the nature and scope of African American history in California and highlight a long-established tradition of activism and accomplishment that aided African Americans in their political, economic, and cultural struggles. These essays underscore the agency and determination of African Americans who lived, worked, and built communities in a state that bristled with racial hostility and, at the same time, offered elusive promise to millions of black men and women who came looking for their piece of the California Dream.



See notes beginning on page 295

*Shirley Ann Wilson Moore received her Ph.D. in U.S. history from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1989 and is associate professor of history at California State University, Sacramento. Her areas of specialty are African American, western, urban, and migrational history. She is completing her first book, To Place Our Deeds: The Black Community in Richmond, California, 1910-1963, which will be published by the University of California Press. Moore is on the editorial board of the Western Historical Quarterly and the board of directors of the Northern California Center for African American Arts. Dr. Moore is also a singer and songwriter who has performed her one-woman multimedia show, "Women's Lives in Song: Workers, Wives, Mothers, Daughters, Lovers and Wild Women," for audiences throughout California.*

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African American worker at the Southern Pacific Railroad's Sacramento shops, 1889. *Southern Pacific Photo.*

# The Historical Demographics of Sacramento's Black Community, 1848-1900

by Clarence Caesar

The historical development of Sacramento's African American community in the years spanning 1850 to 1900 must, of course, be examined within the context of the historical development of the Sacramento region as a whole. It must also be examined, to a lesser degree, in the context of the historical development of the larger statewide black population during this same period. Taken together, these two contexts offer a compelling view of the forces that shaped the destiny of Sacramento's black community as it struggled to gain a foothold in a dynamic and fluid social environment unlike any its citizens had previously known.

Black involvement in the social fabric of California started well before the gold-rush years. However, any reference to California black communities, as we now understand them, can only be considered valid if we take into account that communities are bodies of persons sharing common ideals, goals, circumstances, and interests. In the case of African Americans, this "community identity" became possible only after sizable numbers of them began to settle California's fledgling cities, towns, and mining camps during the early years of the Gold Rush. The growth and development of Sacramento's black community offers a case study of the development of similar African American communities throughout California and the western United States in the second half of the nineteenth century. The social and political processes that brought the first African Americans to the Sacramento region, however, began much earlier in California's history.

The 1810-1822 revolution that overthrew Spanish colonial rule in Mexico enabled the newly formed Mexican government to grant more independence to California's native-born citizens. Known as *cali-*

*fornios*, these citizens, under the direction of the Mexican government, began to expand trade opportunities with foreign merchants. It was under these circumstances that the first groups of African Americans began to appear in California. Black Americans arrived with American vessels associated with the sea otter trade as early as 1816.<sup>1</sup> By the late 1830s a number of American-born blacks had arrived in California as part of sailing or overland trading and trapping expeditions. Among the more prominent individuals were otter hunter Allan B. Light, who became prominent in the affairs of the towns of Santa Barbara and San Diego, and Peter Ranney, a member of the 1826-27 Jedediah Smith expeditions that explored the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys.

The arrival of William Alexander Leidesdorff in California in 1841 signaled the beginning of a permanent African American presence in early California. Leidesdorff was a West Indian-born sailor and merchant of African and Danish ancestry. A skilled seaman, Leidesdorff piloted his 106-ton schooner *Julia Ann* from New Orleans in 1838 and after a three-year Pacific voyage sailed into San Francisco Bay in 1841. Upon arrival in Yerba Buena, Leidesdorff immediately set about establishing a number of business enterprises dealing mostly with trade and land acquisition. By 1844 he was a naturalized Mexican citizen and was eventually granted 35,521 acres of land in the Sacramento Valley near the American River, just east of John A. Sutter's New Helvetia land grant. Sutter, too, was an ambitious man who envisioned himself as the sole authority of his eleven-square-league empire. His intercession with Mexican Governor Manuel Micheltona allowed Leidesdorff to secure the land grant eventually known as Rancho Rio de los





William Alexander Leidesdorff (1812–1848), a wealthy and influential 1840s California pioneer of mixed black African and Caucasian European ancestry.  
*Courtesy California State Library.*

Americanos. Leidesdorff distinguished himself in a number of historical events in California, and at the time of his death in 1848, his career as a businessman, a political liaison to U.S. Consul Thomas O. Larkin, and as a San Francisco city councilman had made him a San Francisco institution. His estate was valued at more than \$1.4 million.<sup>2</sup>

Leidesdorff's death in 1848 was due to brain fever. Only thirty-eight years old at the time, he had accomplished more in his seven-year stay in California than most men could hope to achieve in a lifetime. Following his death, his vast land grant near Sacramento was purchased from his Caribbean family heirs by Joseph Libby Folsom for \$75,000. James Marshall's discovery of gold at Sutter's mill in 1848, and the Gold Rush it generated, was to put the actual value of the new Folsom grant into new perspective, however. By 1849, gold mining had become the chief activity along the banks of the American River,

and some of the best mining was found on Folsom's newly acquired rancho. It was during the Gold Rush, in fact, that early black pioneers settled in the city of Sacramento and other portions of Sacramento County and established social, religious, and economic institutions that steadily evolved into a distinct community.

The California Gold Rush was indeed an earth-shaking event. As word of James Marshall's discovery spread throughout the world, more and more people felt compelled to come to California to try their luck. Many free blacks residing in the eastern and northern sections of the United States strongly felt the urge. For varying reasons, they saw the Gold Rush as an opportunity to improve living conditions that, at best, offered little chance for social and economic advancement. The eastern black and antislavery presses encouraged blacks of means and capabilities to strike out and seek their fortunes in a land perceived by many as laden with untapped wealth. Historian Rudolph Lapp sums up the anticipation of blacks outside California upon hearing news of the discovery of gold:

California became irresistible for many when the antislavery press noted that groups of black men were already there in the early phases of the gold rush and to all appearances were surviving successfully. Early in 1850, the antislavery *Liberator* published a letter from San Francisco sent by thirty-seven black men in which they announced the organization of a mutual-aid society. They noted that it was not just for themselves, but also for "newcomers." Their letter reported that they were earning from \$100 to \$300 a month.<sup>3</sup>

The south fork of the American River was particularly productive, and by 1850 a number of mining camps were established along its banks. As the gold-rush fever picked up tempo, many of the mining communities along the American found within their midst a small but growing number of black prospectors, both slave and free. Whenever these blacks congregated in numbers to stake out mining territory, the name "Nigger" was attached to that geographical location. The names Nigger Bar, Nigger Hill, Nigger Gulch, Nigger Slide, and Nigger Flats were glaring testimony to the racism infecting many, if not most, white miners who worked the fields of the American, Yuba, Tuolumne, and Feather rivers.

Little wonder that by 1850, almost two years after Marshall's discovery, the African American population in California numbered 962 persons, an unknown number of whom were slaves. A substantial majority of these people settled in the northern half of the state, close to the gold fields or along

the coast. The growing cities of San Francisco, Sacramento, and Marysville received most of the new arrivals, and the basis for black community growth and development was established. Census figures for the year 1850 state that there were 240 black people living in Sacramento County at that time. This population was 81 percent male (195) and 18.7 percent female (45). Of this group, 40 percent was listed as mulatto (80 were men and 18 women). Seventy-nine percent of Sacramento County's 1850 black population, or 191 people, lived within the designated boundaries of Sacramento City, representing 3 percent of a city population of 6,280 persons.<sup>4</sup>

Sacramento County in the 1850s consisted of Sacramento City, situated on the east bank of the Sacramento River and the south bank of the American River, and fourteen townships, eight of which were established by the County Court of Sessions on February 24, 1851.<sup>5</sup> Although no accurate census data for 1850 is given with regard to the black populations of these townships, we can reasonably assume that most free black settlers tended to live and work in those townships heavily involved in gold mining. The 1850 census takers' colloquial designations of "living above" or "below" the city on the river can be taken to mean living in township areas of the county. Eight blacks (6 miners, one cook, and one woman) lived "above the city on the river" and one black man, also a cook, was registered as "living below the city on the river."

Little is known about the actual residential patterns of Sacramento's black population in 1850. Sacramento as a city was still undergoing the beginning stages of growth, and nothing discernible as a well-organized city was to be found. The disastrous winter floods of 1850 and 1852, however, were to shape the character of the city in such a way as to force upon it organizational programs to ensure its survival. Sacramento in the early 1850s was a city rapidly evolving from its status as a traveling-miners' waystation. Its proximity to San Francisco's harbors and the Sierra gold fields made it a natural location for the development of trade, commerce, and eventually, permanent settlement. African American settlers and miners coming through the area undoubtedly noticed this potential, and many found it attractive. Most of Sacramento's free black settlers listed in the 1850 census are shown to have been involved in either a trade, an occupation, or a business. Of some 201 persons listed by name in the 1850 census, only 30, mostly women and children, listed no occupation, trade, or business skills.

The cooking trade was the occupation employing most free blacks in Sacramento during the early

1850s. Sixty-four black men were listed as cooks in the city and surrounding townships.<sup>6</sup> Twenty-five men were listed as washermen, 10 as stewards, 8 as barbers, and 9 as miners. These occupations reflected the dependence that Sacramento residents and tradesmen had on the activity of the gold mines and gold fields to the north and east. The talents of cooks and washermen were highly valued by gold miners, who often found themselves isolated in remote sections of the Sierra foothills. Sacramento was a place of rest, relaxation, and recreation for many miners, who often had to go for days or weeks without good food or laundry facilities. Such city "luxuries" were often provided by blacks who took pride in their work. It appears that these workers and businesses not only provided services to the general mining community but also sought to make life easier for black miners in particular.

Twelve blacks were listed in local directories as owners of either eating or coffee houses, and four as owners of boarding houses. These establishments no doubt had a largely black clientele, although there is no way of gauging the amount, if any, of white patronage. Given the fast growth of Sacramento between 1849 and 1854, it is conceivable that whites also supported black eating and boarding establishments if the accommodations and prices were right. Businesses owned by all ethnic groups were clustered together within the same districts and wards, each vying to share the gold-rush market. As Sacramento grew during the 1850s, these areas would become more ethnically distinct, but never fully segregated one from the other. According to Lapp, "as the small black community slowly grew, it tended to cluster along Third Street. Residences and businesses of blacks were scattered up and down this street and on other streets close to where Third Street intersected them."<sup>7</sup> Samuel Colville's *Directory of Sacramento for 1854-55* contains a partial list of black-owned businesses that prospered in this neighborhood. Prominent among them were the Delmonico Saloon, owned by Albert Grubbs and located on L Street between Third and Fourth streets; the Hackett House, a hotel owned by Jessie Hackett, located on Third Street near J Street; a saloon and restaurant, the St. Charles, owned by Edward Hill and William Smith, located on Third Street between J and K streets; and the Indian Chief Restaurant, at Third and I streets, owned by Charles Taylor. Other prominent black-owned and operated businesses that existed at this time were Abraham Giles's floral shop, located on M Street between 24th and 25th, and a well-known shoe store owned by John J. Meshaw on Second Street between J and K streets.



Meshaw was also a business associate of Mifflin W. Gibbs, a prominent African American shoe store owner and political activist in San Francisco, whose later confrontation with hostile white customers would help spark the battle for black testimony rights in California.<sup>8</sup>

The racial composition of the customer base that supported these establishments is open to speculation. Given the small numbers of blacks who lived in Sacramento (a situation that was to plague Sacramento's black-owned establishments well into the 1930s), whites and other ethnic groups probably made up a sizable portion of the patrons for these businesses. Despite the underlying racism that often characterized relationships between blacks and whites in California during this period, as was true of other cities in the American northern states, many whites apparently overlooked the race factor when considering where they would dine, sleep, or have their laundry done.

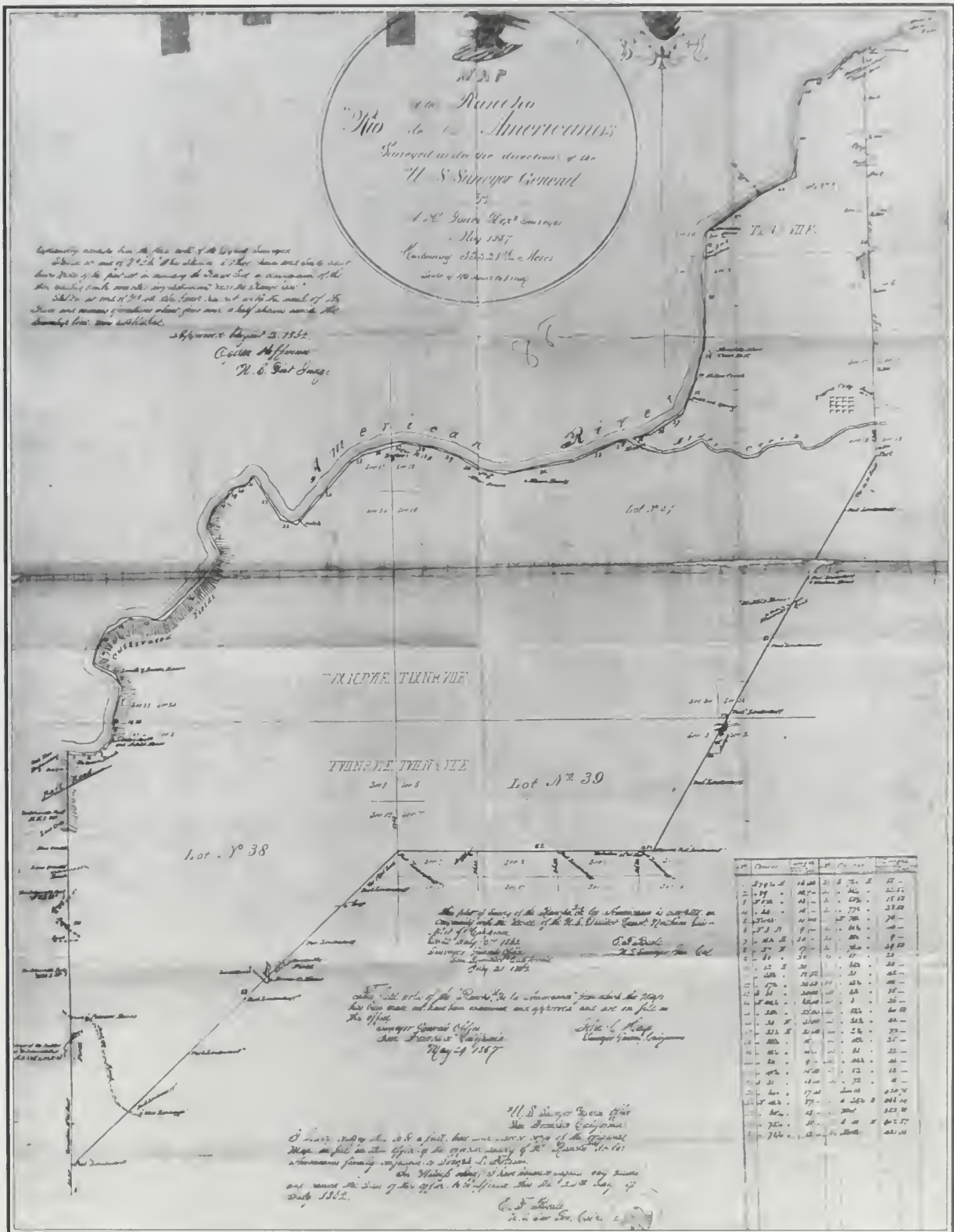
During the second half of the 1850s, Sacramento grew to nearly twice its 1850 size despite disastrous floods in 1850 and 1852-53, and a near-disastrous fire in 1850 that damaged large portions of the business district. In 1853, the designation of Sacramento as the capital of California gave the spirit of the town a much-needed boost as it grew into cityhood. Its incorporation and definition of boundaries in February 1850 prompted the division of the city into four municipal wards. These wards allowed the city to govern a growing population more efficiently. The boundaries of the wards were to change a number of times until 1860, when the Eighth U.S. Census started enumeration of Sacramento's population by city wards.

The *Sacramento City Directory of 1854-55* lists a number of black residents, as well as their occupations and businesses. The majority of these residents lived within the city's first and second wards, which formed its westernmost portion. The greatest concentrations were found in an area known as the West End, bordered by Front Street to the west, Fifth Street to the east, I Street to the north, and R Street to the south. The nature of the occupations and businesses listed in the directory do not vary greatly from those listed in the 1850 census—mostly service-oriented enterprises such as barbershops, laundries, blacksmiths, saloons, and restaurants catering to a population in transition from transience to permanent settlement. In 1855, the First Colored Convention, a statewide gathering in Sacramento of black political and social leaders, estimated the economic worth of Sacramento's black community at \$250,000, or \$500 per man, woman, and child.<sup>9</sup>

During the 1850s, the institutional foundations for black community life in Sacramento were also laid. The establishment of the Colored (later Bethel, then St. Andrews) African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.) began in 1850 with the congregation's first meeting at the home of Daniel Blue on I Street between Fourth and Fifth. The Reverend Darius Stokes, a Methodist minister from Baltimore, had tried to organize an A.M.E. congregation in Sacramento as early as 1849, but was unsuccessful due to the transient nature of the black mining population. Frustrated by his experience in Sacramento, Stokes left for San Francisco. All apparently was not lost for the fledgling church, however. By 1850, Barney and George Fletcher, brothers from Maryland, had arrived in town, and they served as the catalysts for getting the church organized. By the end of the year, the church's first trustees, James R. Brown, John Barton, George Fletcher, John L. Wilson, and Chesterfield Jackson, purchased part of lot "number one," on the east side of 7th Street between G and H streets, from Barton Leeds at a cost of \$250. By early 1851, a small wood-frame church building was erected on the site. The church was deeded as the Methodist Church of Colored People of Sacramento City.<sup>10</sup>

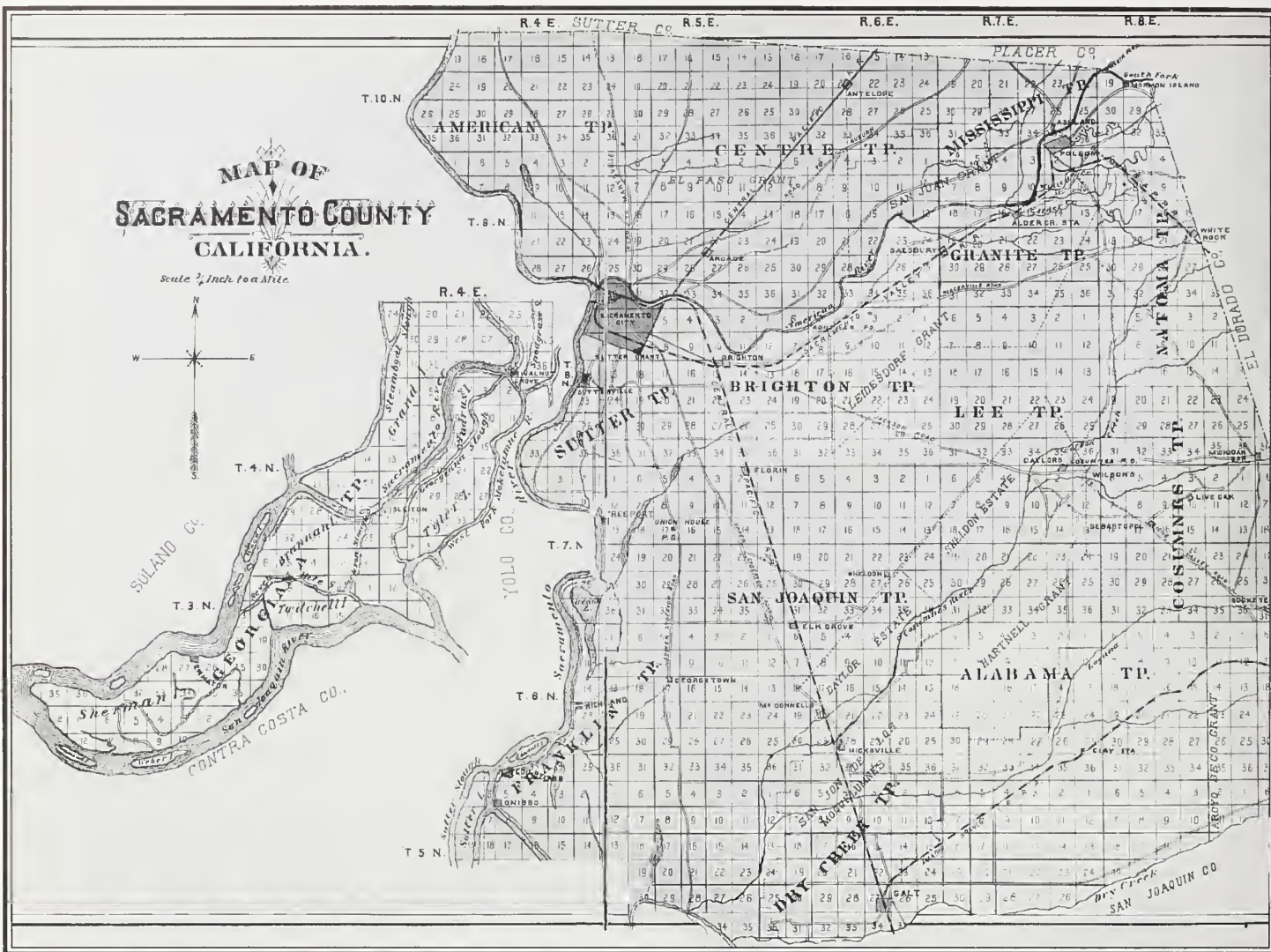
Along with its four sister churches—St. Cyprian A.M.E. (1854), Little Pilgrim A.M.E. (1857), and Third Baptist Church (1852), all located in San Francisco, and Ebenezer Baptist Church of Stockton—St. Andrews A.M.E. became a focal point of black religious life in gold-rush California. Its role in developing other black community institutions expanded through the years, making the church a valuable institution not only to Sacramento, but to all of northern California. In addition, St. Andrews and its members hosted two important statewide "Colored Conventions" in 1855 and 1856 that helped focus the ideas and resources of California's blacks on resolution of the political and socio-economic dilemmas they faced regarding their lack of human and civil rights.

The strategies and policies adopted at the black conventions of 1855 and 1856 continued the aggressive, forthright approach that black leadership had begun taking to challenge the state's white-dominated power structure on a variety of basic issues. These strategies included filing written petitions to state legislatures on behalf of securing testimony rights and the franchise for blacks, pooling monies for the legal defense of runaway slaves captured under California's short-lived Fugitive Slave Law (1852-1855), and numerous written and verbal appeals to local education boards for equal access



Sacramento County Recorder's Map of Rancho Rio de Los Americanos, as plotted in 1857. The dimensions of the rancho as shown are the same as those granted to William Alexander Leidesdorff by Mexican Governor Manuel Micheltorena in 1844. The total acreage of this land grant was 35,521 acres. Courtesy Sacramento History and Science Division, Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center





Map of Sacramento County, from Thomas H. Thompson and Albert A. West, *History of Sacramento County, California*, 1880 (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1960). The Leidesdorff grant is visible in the eastern half of Brighton Township, extending northeast into Granite Township. Courtesy Sacramento History and Science Division, Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center.

to public schools. An important vehicle for the dissemination of information to the black community was the establishment in 1856 of California's first black-owned and managed newspaper, the *San Francisco Mirror of the Times*. Sacramento convention delegates such as John G. Wilson, James Nicholas, Emory Wilson, Jeremiah B. Sanderson, and George W. Booth were integral activists in the execution and funding of these activities. These men, along with other men and women throughout northern California, formed the nucleus of groups such as the State Executive Committee, the statewide organization dedicated to the complete repeal of discriminatory laws during the 1850s and 1860s.

The Colored Conventions of 1855 and 1856 reinforced the role of Sacramento's black community as an integral part of a statewide network of activists dedicated to vanquishing racist laws and practices. The conventions also provided California's black citizens a platform that was used to gauge their socioeconomic status in their varied locales. With an estimated cumulative net worth of \$2.4 million, black Californians felt well-suited to conduct the struggle for full citizenship in their newly adopted home. There was no doubt in their minds that Sacramento, the state capital, was the main battleground in the campaign for civil and human rights.

Eighteen fifty-six saw the development of another

black religious institution in Sacramento, the Baptist Church. Under the leadership of the Reverend Charles Satchel of San Francisco, a small but enthusiastic congregation gathered at the Chinese Chapel, the first Chinese Baptist chapel erected in the United States, at 6th and H streets, to hold the first meeting of black Baptists in Sacramento. The congregation called itself Siloam, the biblical name of a healing pool mentioned in John 9:7. The congregation numbered some twenty-one persons.<sup>11</sup> The church was later renamed Shiloh Baptist Church. By 1859, the congregation welcomed its first minister, Rev. John W. Flowers, and began raising money to purchase its own building. In 1860, the church purchased a former Jewish synagogue located on Fifth Street, between N and O streets.<sup>12</sup> Like its predecessor St. Andrews A.M.E., Siloam was to provide a place of solace and comfort for its members, and a platform for launching social and charitable organizations and activities that would uplift Sacramento's black citizens.

The organized efforts of black benevolent and fraternal organizations in Sacramento found their initial impetus in the establishment of Philomethan Lodge No. 2, Free and Accepted Masons. Organized by Dr. R.J. Fletcher on November 6, 1853, the Philomethan Lodge worked under a charter obtained in England and, according to historian Walter G. Reed, "secured quite a large membership." The Philomethan Lodge is the oldest black fraternal lodge on the West Coast, preceding by months the formation of San Francisco's Hannibal Lodge No. 1. The establishment of this early lodge stands beside the founding of black religious institutions as an indication of the sense of permanence many blacks in Sacramento were beginning to feel. It also provided another organizational format by which men with divergent educational and social backgrounds could come together around a single body of knowledge to organize in order to pursue similar objectives. In January 1856, Philomethan Lodge, Hannibal Lodge, and Victoria Lodge No. 3 of Oakland finalized the organization of a Grand Lodge of black Masons in California. Among the ranking officers of the Grand Lodge was James Carter of Sacramento, who was elected Deputy Grand Master.<sup>13</sup>

Tying together the spiritual and the secular allowed lodge members to expand the scope of charitable and social activities that required attention in the black community. Charity provided by these groups may have extended to others not reached by the churches or by social service groups. Many lodge members were also active in the statewide civil rights movement. Philomethan

Lodge members and members of later fraternal organizations, such as Isaiah Dunlap and John C. Wilson, had their names prominently displayed on the logs of statewide conventions or on redress petitions to the legislature. They also supported the efforts of the black press by acting as circulation agents for the *Mirror of the Times* and the *Pacific Appeal* in Sacramento.

In education, blacks throughout California confronted legal restrictions against their full participation in public schools. Like other non-white ethnic groups, African Americans were forced to provide educational opportunities for their children outside mainstream institutions established by local school boards. Sacramento's black community addressed this concern on May 29, 1854, when Elizabeth Thorn Scott, a black woman from New Bedford, Massachusetts, commenced the first school for black children in her home on Second Street, between M and N streets. Fourteen children attended the first session. A Colored School Committee, consisting of seven men and one woman, formed later that year. The committee was headed by another native of New Bedford, Jeremiah B. Sanderson, who is considered by many historians to be the "Father of Black Education in California." A protégé of Frederick Douglass, Sanderson was instrumental in the establishment of black schools in Sacramento, San Francisco, Oakland, and Stockton. Under his leadership, the Colored School Committee successfully lobbied the Sacramento School Board in July 1855 to partially fund a school for black children and provide it with a new structure.

Funding for this new structure, however, was slow in developing. Elizabeth Scott married Isaac Flood later that year and left Sacramento by 1856, prompting Sanderson to assume her duties as teacher. By 1859, supplemental fundraising by black parents helped secure a site for a school on O Street, between 9th and 10th streets. Ms. B.F. Folger, a white teacher, was in charge of a class of approximately twenty-five pupils. Several calamities prevented a smooth beginning for the new black school, though. The structure was nearly destroyed by flood waters during the winter of 1861. By 1863, a new building was erected at 5th and O streets but faced reconstruction within the span of a year, when an arsonist destroyed the structure.

By 1866, the rebuilt school opened for instruction. It served as the cornerstone of local black education under a number of teachers, reaching its zenith under the leadership of Sarah Mildred Jones, Sacramento's first fully accredited African American



teacher. A graduate of Oberlin College in Ohio, Jones arrived in Sacramento in 1873 and served as teacher of the all-black school until the early 1880s. Although the landmark state Supreme Court decision in *Ward v. Flood* effectively removed some of the legal underpinnings of segregated education in California in 1874, the ruling only applied to areas that had no existing all-black schools. Sarah Jones thus spent the first decade of her tenure teaching at the all-black school. With the advent of total racial integration of Sacramento schools in the 1880s, however, Jones was immediately incorporated into the new system. In 1894 she became Sacramento's first African American school principal, as head of Fremont School at 24th and N streets. Recognized by her professional peers as an excellent teacher and administrator, Jones held her position as principal until her retirement in 1915.<sup>14</sup>

Although the political, social, and educational struggles of Sacramento's black community sometimes presented formidable obstacles, many blacks saw in Sacramento a place suited to their dreams and aspirations for a better life. While life in pre-Civil War America was harsh for both free blacks and slaves, the wider social horizons offered in California still afforded black pioneers a greater chance for social and economic improvement than in any other state. Sacramento in the 1850s reflected this new spirit as much as any place in the state, and because of its strong, activist community, became the site of black California's earliest political struggles. Given the open hostility of many state legislators to the presence of blacks in California, the statewide black community recognized its need to be politically organized and geographically able to confront the government on issues such as their exclusion from testimony rights and suffrage, segregated schools, and the continued practice of slavery in the state. Its location and strong black leadership made Sacramento an ideal battleground to carry out such a campaign.

Throughout the 1850s and early 1860s, a number of white politicians in the state capitol either proposed or passed legislation that attempted to bar blacks physically from the state, deny them testimony rights (Section 394 of the Civil Practices Act of 1851 and Section 14 of the Criminal Act of 1851), deny them the right to vote, and deny their children equal access to education. Also passed was a state version of the nationwide Fugitive Slave Law, which made it legal for non-resident white slaveholders to recapture runaway slaves within state boundaries. The legislators supporting these laws were most often Democrats hailing from southern and border

states and were represented most prominently by former Kentuckian M.M. Carver of Sacramento, former Texan Thomas Jefferson Green of Yuba County and Sacramento, O.M. Wozencraft and A.G. Stakes of San Joaquin County, and J.B. Warfield of Nevada County.

The tenacity of this anti-black legislative block was evident in its persistent refusal even to consider the numerous petitions and written appeals presented to it by black political organizations such as the State Executive Committee, the political action arm of the Colored Convention movement. Also apparent was these legislators' insistence on attempting to pass laws barring blacks from immigrating to the state. The influence of these racist white legislators was clearly at its peak in the 1850s, and they were successful in fending off all organized black resistance to their agenda.

By the early 1860s, however, forces emerging in the nation's eastern and southern states were permanently dislodging many of these men from power. The election of Republican Abraham Lincoln to the presidency in November 1860 and the election of Republican Leland Stanford as governor of California in 1861 threw the state solidly behind the Union cause in what was to become the nation's bloodiest civil conflict. Although California's military role in the conflict was limited, black Californians felt that the time was opportune to tap into the anti-slavery sentiment generated by the war and the ascendancy of the Republican Party to press for their basic civil rights. In 1862, President Lincoln issued his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation to those southern slaves in areas under the control of Union forces. This action generated the enthusiasm and will of black Californians and their Republican allies in the legislature to strike down laws barring black testimony. By March 1863, Senator Richard F. Perkins of San Francisco introduced successful legislation that overturned the Civil and Criminal Acts of 1851. On March 21, 1863, the San Francisco-based *Pacific Appeal*, then California's only black-owned and operated newspaper, printed a thanksgiving resolution on behalf of California's black community to the legislature for its action on the Perkins Bill. Blacks in Sacramento and other California cities hailed the new legislation as a milestone in the struggle for civil rights. Unfortunately, the law did not apply to California's Chinese residents, whose larger numbers made them a more visible economic and political threat to white dominance. They were not released from the testimony ban until 1872, when the testimony laws were overturned in deference to federal civil rights laws.<sup>15</sup>

During the early 1860s, the black population of Sacramento County grew by 95 percent over its 1850 total. Of the 468 blacks recorded in the 1860 census, 394 resided in the city of Sacramento.<sup>16</sup> Because the 1860 and 1870 censuses also contain population figures for Sacramento County townships and Sacramento City wards, it is possible to track more accurately the residential patterns of the black community during those periods. These two census reports were the only ones to record this information for Sacramento's blacks until the advent of census tract data in 1950.

The growth of the county black population during the 1860s is remarkable given the sudden exodus of many African Americans from California in 1858 following the discovery of gold along the Fraser

River in British Columbia and the attempted passage of racist legislation by the California Legislature. The 1860 census records eight Sacramento County townships with one or more black residents. The townships with the largest black populations were Cosumnes, on the county's eastern border with Amador County, and Granite, in the northeastern part of the county, bordering Placer County. Their black populations were 22 and 14 persons respectively. This was a continuation of a residential pattern established during the early days of the Gold Rush. Both these townships continued to be heavily involved in gold-mining activities, which had attracted a large but transient mining population during the 1850s.

Black population figures for these two townships



Sacramento, J and Sixth streets, ca. 1860, in Sacramento's West End, a center of the city's black population.  
*Courtesy California State Library.*



do not indicate whether black residents were part of their permanent settlements or their transitory mining communities. Granite Township contained within its geographical boundaries the mining camps known as Nigger (later Negro) Bar, a camp on the south fork of the American River where the city of Folsom now stands, and Nigger (later Negro) Hill, a more prosperous camp located near Mormon Island. These camps' allure for black and white miners was the result of their rich gold deposits, which were known to yield one or two ounces a day to the hand.<sup>17</sup> Historian Rudolph Lapp notes that Chinese and Portuguese miners were also prominent members of these mining communities, and that blacks from Massachusetts opened a store and boardinghouse at Negro Hill. Other townships recording black populations were, in order of size, Sutter, Dry Creek, Alabama, Centre, Natoma, and Lee. Because Cosumnes Township had no major concentrations of black miners during this period, it can be assumed that black miners in the area tended to mine their claims individually or in partnership with non-black miners.

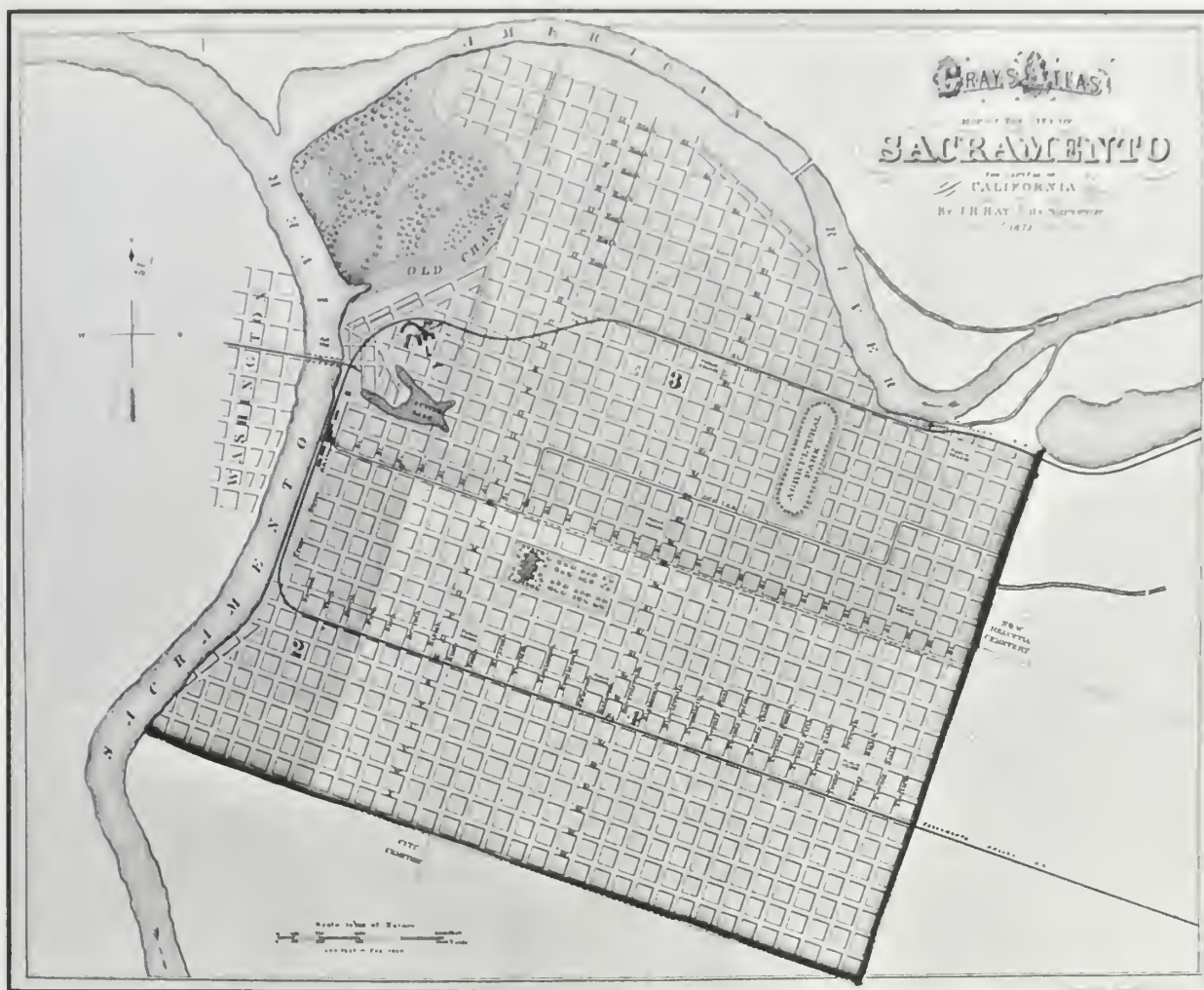
Within Sacramento City, the black population of 1860 was broken down by city wards. The Second Ward recorded the largest black population, with a total of 155 persons (83 men, 72 women). Next largest was the Fourth Ward, with 104 persons (63 men, 41 women). The First Ward recorded 98 blacks (84 men, 14 women), and the Third Ward totaled 37 (23 men, 14 women). The total black population of Sacramento City represented 2.9 percent of the total city population of 13,785. The ratio of men to women in the black community at this time compared favorably with other ethnic groups in the city. The most disproportionate ratios were found in the Chinese community, where the populations tended to be overwhelmingly male. The Chinese numbers in the First Ward (453 men, 141 women) and the Third Ward (197 men, 22 women) show ratios of 4 to 1 and 8 to 1, respectively. Among Sacramento whites, the ratio of men to women was most disproportionate in the First Ward (1,690 men, 413 women), a ratio of 4 to 1. The other wards reflected more balance, with none exceeding 2 to 1. Given the overwhelmingly male population of Sacramento in the early 1850s, the number of black women, though small, reflected as much parity with its male population as any other group. These figures suggest that the black migration to Sacramento was remarkably family-oriented.<sup>18</sup>

In part because of the presence of so many families, Sacramento's black population in the 1860s formed itself into a well-established community of

working and business people struggling with the complex economic and political issues of their day. Those struggles were to shape the character of the community and provide it with a basis for unity. Although they were not residentially segregated in the same sense as some of their free brethren in other parts of the country, Sacramento's African American citizens still faced economic, educational, political, and occupational discrimination. Even with the eventual repeal of some discriminatory laws, black Sacramentans would continue to suffer socially and economically from more subtle forms of northern-style *de facto* discrimination. These practices in many ways reflected white unwillingness to accept the presence of black citizens in all aspects of their lives. Despite these obstacles, the social life of Sacramento's African Americans was surprisingly varied.

Despite the idealism and patriotic fervor prevalent in California during the Civil War years, blacks in Sacramento and throughout the state still found themselves having to agitate for such basic American rights as voting, testimonial rights, non-segregated education for their children, and economic opportunity in the marketplace. Even after successes such as the passage of the Perkins Bill, black religious and social institutions still found it necessary to take the initiative in the development of community leadership and political savvy for self-help and self-protection. Educational segregation, for example, prompted Sacramento's African Americans to form literary societies, organize musical recitals, and offer church-related recreational activities to their youth. This continued a tradition begun in the 1850s, when musical groups such as the Ethiopian Serenaders, the New Orleans Serenaders, and the Sable Harmonists entertained local audiences with their interpretations of contemporary music.

Fraternal and benevolent organizations such as the Philomathean Lodge and the United Sons of Friendship (organized in 1861) of Shiloh Baptist Church also continued to provide community leadership for ongoing political and economic struggles. The United Sons of Friendship later prevented the collapse of Shiloh Baptist by rescuing it from foreclosure by Sacramento Savings Bank in 1879. The group purchased the church building and land from Sacramento Savings for the outstanding balance of the note, \$1,646, and returned the property to the congregation. The fact that many members of the organization were also members of Shiloh Baptist demonstrates another example of the partnerships between religious and secular organizations within the black community.



Gray's Atlas map of Sacramento, 1873.  
 Courtesy Sacramento History and Science Division, Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center.

Many political struggles faced by the African American community during the gold-rush years were eventually resolved through legislation passed by more racially enlightened Republican state and federal governments of the 1860s. The removal of the odious Fugitive Slave Law in 1855 assured many blacks, both slave and free, that their basic physical protection from southern slave catchers was secure. The state's prohibition against blacks' testifying against whites in court was also struck down during the Civil War, and the right of California's black citizens to vote was secured with the ratification of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution in 1868 and 1870 (although California, by then back in Democratic hands, was one of the states that refused to rat-

ify the amendments). And finally, despite the slowness of its implementation, the racial integration of California's public schools became a legal reality with the State Supreme Court decisions of *Ward v. Flood* in 1874 and *Wypsinger v. Cruikshank* in 1894. Despite such overdue assistance from government in correcting these social inequalities, much credit for their resolution must go to the spirited resistance to injustice that California's black communities displayed throughout the gold-rush years. Without the educated and informed strategies of California's black political leadership and rank-and-file citizens, the realization of these achievements would have been much more difficult to attain.

The census reports of 1870 and 1880 show a steady, but much lower rate of growth for Sacramento's



black community. Unlike the 1860 census, however, these reports did not provide the breakdown of males and females by ward. From 1860 to 1870 the rate of growth of blacks was only 1.58 percent in the county as a whole. Of the 475 blacks in the county in 1870, 418 resided in Sacramento City. The city's black population increased by 6 percent over the previous decade, but lost ground to the growth of the city as a whole by one-tenth of one percent. The total city population of 16,283 represented a growth increase of 18 percent. African Americans represented 1.8 percent of the city total.<sup>19</sup>

The 1870 census also reveals a demographic shift of the black population within Sacramento City wards. The Second Ward still remained the dominant area of black population, with a total of 227 blacks within its boundaries, an increase of 62.8 percent over 1850. The Fourth Ward remained second highest in number of black residents (88 persons), but recorded a loss of 15.3 percent in black population compared to 1850. The largest black population growth occurred in the Third Ward, which held the fewest blacks in 1850. This ward's black population increased from 37 persons in 1850 to 74 persons in 1860, an increase of 100 percent. By contrast, the First Ward's black community plummeted from 98 persons in 1850 to 29 persons in 1870, a drop of 70 percent. The population shifts from the First and Fourth wards into the Second and Third wards, in the city's West End, suggest the first signs of permanent geographical community residence among Sacramento blacks. The process of ghettoization had not been an issue for black Sacramentans during the 1850s because of the newness of the city and the transient nature of its early population.

The West End of Sacramento City in the 1870s was a multiethnic neighborhood of homes, churches, schools, businesses, bars, and bordellos. Its centralized location enabled black residents to organize socially and economically and to take advantage of the central city's recreational and business assets. During this decade, the African American community experienced more institutional development, specifically the 1871 organization of Adah Chapter No. 2 of the Order of the Eastern Star, a female adjunct to the Philomethan Lodge, and in 1879 the founding of the Janissaries of Light, Friendship Temple No. 41, a mutual benefit and social society made up of men and women. Both groups were initiated by perennial organizer Dr. R.J. Fletcher to help the black community become more self-sufficient, and to satisfy the social needs of citizens denied full access to mainstream institutions and activities. Such fraternal and social organizations offered the

community a secular vehicle for organizing social functions such as dances, musical and literary recitals, youth activities, sporting events, and mass community activities. Using the parks and meeting halls available to them, these organizations enabled African Americans to share, within their limited social status, many of the public spaces the city had to offer for social and recreational functions.<sup>20</sup>

Outside the city limits, Sacramento County reported only six townships with a black population of one or more persons in 1870. Granite Township led the county districts with 22 persons, an increase of eight over 1860, while the population of blacks in Cosumnes Township declined from 22 to 15. Sutter, Brighton, Franklin, and Lee townships also reported black residents. The Colored Convention of 1865 recorded 10 black farmers in Sacramento County. Most or all of these farmers would have likely resided in these outlying townships.<sup>21</sup>

For sixty years beginning in 1880, the census provided little specific demographic data on the Sacramento region's black community, other than the total numbers of persons for county and city. The 1880 census recorded the county and city black populations as totaling 560 and 455, respectively, which constituted growth rates of 15 percent for the county and 8 percent for the city. But the census failed to provide separate numbers for male and female residents. Local data for black populations in Sacramento County townships and city wards was also no longer broken out, although populations of townships were recorded until the 1900 census. The total county population in 1880 was 34,390 persons, an increase of 21.9 percent over 1870, and the city population of 21,420 persons represented a rise of 23.9 percent. Blacks now represented 1.6 percent of the county and 2.1 percent of the city populations.<sup>22</sup>

The decade from 1880 to 1890 began a "settled" period for Sacramento's black community. The energetic impetus of the Gold Rush, which had brought hundreds of pioneer black miners, tradesmen, and laborers to northern California during the previous thirty years, had dissipated by the 1880s. The populated areas of northern California had by 1880 become more like the well-settled areas of the eastern United States, with many of their attendant social problems. For blacks in Sacramento and throughout the state, this meant an increasing effort to maintain and consolidate the gains of the 1860s and 1870s.

Race relations in California shifted to more subtle expressions of racism and social ostracism. Though no longer bound by legal segregation, by the



Sarah Mildred Jones, ca. 1900, one of the first African American school teachers in the Sacramento schools. A graduate of Oberlin College, Ohio, Jones had a teaching and administrative career in Sacramento that lasted 42 years. She served as principal of Fremont School at 24th and N streets from 1894 until her retirement in 1915. Courtesy Sacramento History and Science Division, Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center/Clarissa Hundley Wildy.

1880s African Americans in California reluctantly arrived at an "understanding" with the white majority that certain social and political opportunities were unattainable for the majority of blacks. This was reflected in the fact that few blacks attained political positions of note in the state. The lone exception was Edward P. Duplex, a long-time activist and businessman who was elected mayor of Wheatland, Yuba County, in 1888.<sup>23</sup> These constraints did not prevent the majority of black adults from making decent livings at those occupations available to them. Barbering, for example, could provide blacks with a middle-class standard of living. Since barbers constituted the most numerous and prosperous of the city's black entrepreneurs during this period, it is not surprising that a middle-class lifestyle, complete with all the attendant social and moral trap-

pings, was possible for a number of black families in Sacramento.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the fact that many blacks did not own their own homes or other costly assets, they could attain a relatively comfortable material life. Statistics for black home-ownership in Sacramento were not available in the U.S. Census in 1900, but home-ownership for all black Californians stood at 861 units out of an overall total of 2,661 units. San Francisco was listed as having 365 black households, with a total of 19 housing units owned. We can only speculate at this time that Sacramento County, with its small black population of 511 persons (402 in Sacramento City) had even fewer households than San Francisco, along with lower rates of home-ownership and substantially fewer home-owning families.<sup>25</sup>

While black Californians made political gains in the 1870s, they continued to find themselves confronted with barriers that barred them from full participation in the social, economic, and political lives of many communities. In urban areas such as Sacramento and San Francisco, they faced new adversarial confrontations with all-white labor unions for jobs they had traditionally held since the 1850s. These confrontations at the workplace were calculated to remove blacks and Chinese from positions long coveted by native and immigrant white workers. Although early labor leaders, such as Denis Kearney of the Workingman's Party of California, sought to recruit blacks into their anti-Chinese labor campaign of 1877 (a move opposed by the editorial staff of the *Pacific Appeal* in March 1878), the California labor movement as a whole tended to adopt a hostile attitude toward all people of color. The hotel and restaurant industries and the craft trades were particular targets of fledgling labor unions because of the inroads Chinese workers, and, to a lesser extent, black workers had made in these enterprises over the years. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, movements by some militant union-oriented whites against Chinese workers erupted in towns and cities across the state, often resulting in the loss of life and property. As the economic disparity between the monied classes and the working poor grew larger in California's larger cities, blacks often found it hard to stay clear of the class-warfare crossfire. In situations where they had achieved a modicum of success in their occupations, the threat of confrontations with the unions tended to increase.

As the hotel industry unionized, too, black porters, waiters, chambermaids, bellhops, and bootblacks found themselves unceremoniously fired by white managers and owners who had once considered



them valuable assets. In 1889, for example, with the complicit support of the all-white Cooks and Waiters Union, the management of the Palace Hotel in San Francisco fired its entire black staff of over 200 men and women, and in a matter of months replaced them with white workers. This action illustrated on a grand scale the everyday struggles that many black workers faced across northern California. An awareness of their decreasing job opportunities, even in fields they had once dominated, contributed significantly to slowing the growth rates of the small black populations of San Francisco and Sacramento in the 1880s and 1890s.

Although information about the impact of the hotel union's activity on Sacramento's black workers is scant, there is evidence that various branches of the Cooks and Waiters Union were blatantly hostile in their dealings with black workers. By 1902, this sentiment would become the subject of an editorial in the *Portland New Age* [Oregon] newspaper, which commented on the position taken by the Sacramento Cooks and Waiters Union that it would be an all-white organization.<sup>26</sup> Such objectives put the emerging unions at odds with companies and enterprises long used to hiring black and Chinese labor. In order to keep the peace with these unions, many companies preferred to dismiss their non-white workers and replace them with white union members. The total extent of this displacement of black labor by white union activity has never been quantified, but it may well have adversely affected the growth patterns of black populations in northern California cities for the fifty years spanning 1890 to 1940, and may even, to some extent, explain the growth of the black population of Los Angeles during this period. Further study of this subject is worthy of the attention of students of both labor and ethnic history.

In part because of gloomy economic prospects for African Americans, by 1890 Sacramento's black population had begun to decline, in both the city and county. The county's 1890 total of 513 blacks represented an 8.3-percent population decrease from the 1880 total; the city, with 401 blacks, had suffered a slightly higher decline (11 percent). This stood in stark contrast to the growth of the city (18.8 percent) and county (14.7 percent) as a whole. The black percentages of both the city and county populations declined by six-tenths of one percent and three-tenths of one percent respectively by 1890. Blacks now constituted only 1.3 percent of the county and 1.5 percent of the city population in 1890.<sup>27</sup>

The growth and development of the cities of southern California appears to have been another

reason for the slow growth or absolute decline of black populations in northern California during the decades surrounding the turn of the century. The opening up and promotion of vast areas of southern California land for settlement and speculation by the Southern Pacific Railroad and other private landowners created a surge in that region's population during the 1880s. Aided by railroad linkages to major northern California cities and access to eastern overland routes, Los Angeles grew from a small town with a population of 11,311 in 1880, to a phenomenal 50,394 people in 1890, a growth rate of 346 percent.<sup>28</sup>

Like northern Californians of many ethnic groups, African Americans, whose newly won emancipation from legalized slavery had gained them mobility, found that their attraction to Los Angeles and its perceived opportunities was strong. Word quickly spread throughout black communities nationwide that Los Angeles was a place where blacks could find opportunity and upward mobility. By the mid-1880s, Los Angeles's black population had achieved parity with that of San Francisco, although the southern city's total population was a tiny percentage of that of its northern rival. This burgeoning population stood in direct contrast to reports from northern California regarding the losses of jobs due to racist tactics employed by white businesses and unions toward black workers. By 1890, Los Angeles had the largest black population in the state, with a total of 1,817 persons, a position of prominence that Los Angeles continues to hold even today.

Despite static or declining populations during the last decades of the nineteenth century, the black community of the city of Sacramento remained a firmly established and productive entity, concentrated primarily in the West End neighborhood. City directories of the period list a number of black-owned and operated businesses and social institutions with locations in the West End. Although the directories do not provide racial identities of most entries (a practice virtually eliminated by the 1870s), some institutions carried the designation "colored" in parentheses next to their entry. Most entries so identified had West End addresses. The churches, social halls, saloons, businesses, and residences of this area provided the very foundations of black community life in Sacramento at the turn of the century.

Nevertheless, in the turn-of-the-century decades, many blacks, frustrated by decades of discrimination and lured by promises of new opportunities, were relocating from Sacramento and other northern cities to Los Angeles and other towns in south-



St. Andrew's African Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1869 and shown here circa 1940, stood at 7th between G and H streets. When the church moved to its new building at 8th and V in 1951, this structure was demolished. *Courtesy Sacramento History and Science Division, Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center.*

ern California. As a result, the black population of Sacramento continued a pattern of slow growth until well into the 1930s. With this slow growth came a stagnation in the development of a professional and business class, which failed to be competitive with that of the white majority community. It was only in the 1940s, with the advent of explosive economic expansion during World War II, that Sacramento and other northern California cities would witness the phenomenal black population growth that served as the precursor to today's dynamic and still-growing African American communities. CTB

*See notes beginning on page 295.*

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This early, rare photograph shows the students of Sacramento's Segregated School No. 2, at 9th and O streets, ca. 1882, with teacher Sarah Mildred Jones (back row, center).  
*Courtesy Sacramento History and Science Division, Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center/Clarissa Hundley Wildy.*

# Knowledge is Power

## Sacramento Blacks and the Public Schools, 1854–1860

by Susan Bragg

*Knowledge gives to its possessors a power and a superiority over the uncultivated, real and substantial. The ignorant must give place and yield to the intelligent and educated.*

—J.J. Moore and T.M.D. Ward,  
1855 Colored Citizens Convention

Speaking to the congregation of San Francisco's St. Cyprian's African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1857, Peter Cole proclaimed that "we are a race distinct in color but made by the same hands that make white. We differ from him only on account of knowledge." Cole urged black Californians to seize all opportunities for education. "Why shall we of this state," he asked, "not seek this equality, that shall enable us to come out triumphant?"<sup>1</sup> In Sacramento, the black community demonstrated this belief in the uplifting power of education, pressing city officials to support the local colored school throughout the 1850s. Although many city and state officials insisted that black Californians had no legal or moral right to receive public funds for education, Sacramento's black residents continued to claim their right to share the benefits of community institutions, and in the process launched the long-term struggle to integrate the state's public schools.

California's public education system developed slowly at both the state and local level. Delegates to the 1849 California constitutional convention refused to levy any taxes to support public education, believing the sale of federal lands would provide sufficient funding for common schools. Early legislative sessions also declined to tax California's largely adult male population to support public schools. Not until 1852 did state legislators create a practical system of public school organization.<sup>2</sup> The 1852 legislation authorized a temporary state property tax to pay for the development of schools, but state lawmakers expected individual counties to provide the majority of funding needed to maintain local schools. Money collected from the sale of public lands was to be deposited in a common school fund and

divided among communities "in proportion to the number of children residing therein between the ages of five and eighteen."<sup>3</sup>

The 1852 school act gave communities the power to tax residents for public education, and, accordingly, in 1853 the Sacramento City Council levied a tax of one-fourth of one percent on all local property. The council also authorized the creation of a board of education to distribute money received from the state's common school fund and oversee the management of local schools.<sup>4</sup> Sacramento County officials, however, contested the control of state education funds, but, after considerable public outcry over the county's inept management of the handful of existing public schools, on December 4, 1854, the city wrested control of the state funds from the county and assumed full authority over all schools within Sacramento's city limits.<sup>5</sup> When Sacramento city school superintendent Dr. H.W. Harkness made his first quarterly report to the school board, six schools were in operation, with over 578 students registered and an average daily attendance rate of 463 students.<sup>6</sup>

While neither the 1852 state legislation nor the 1853 Sacramento City Council ordinance established a public school system that excluded minority children, there was no question among city and state officials as to whom this legislation was to benefit.<sup>7</sup> In January of 1855, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paul K. Hubbs, reassuring the public after complaints that a black teacher had participated in the state Educational Convention, declared that "whilst I foster by all proper means the education of the colored races, I should deem it a death to our system to permit the mixture of the races in the same



school or to take any action, other than that prompted by benevolent feeling for the true benefit of the colored races."<sup>8</sup> Hubbs later made it clear that state funds were intended only for the education of white children. "The education of all others, whether negro or mongol or Indian," he emphasized, "must depend upon the benevolent care of our citizens, or upon their own capacity to pay for it."<sup>9</sup> That same year, the California legislature amended the school code to ensure that state funds were only appropriated "in proportion to the number of *white* children as shown by the census taken by the school marshals."<sup>10</sup> Hubbs's successor as state superintendent of public instruction, Andrew Jackson Moulder, later declared that, "had it been intended by the framers of the [school] law that the children of inferior races should be educated side by side with the whites, it is manifest the census would have included children of all colors."<sup>11</sup>

The exclusion of black children from public schools was not unusual in mid-nineteenth-century America. In most of the South, schools for blacks were virtually non-existent. Educating slaves was illegal in all southern states by 1850, although many slaves did learn to read and write through clandestine studies or secret schools. In 1863, Sacramento minister J.T. Jenifer recalled that "born in a slave state, he had no school privileges [*sic*] . . . he had by stealth, mastered the contents of a Primer. With a book in his bosom, the wharf, the deck of a steamboat, behind the bale of cotton, in the open air or in the chamber hidden had been his school." With this story, Jenifer urged his fellow delegates at an African Methodist Episcopal conference to encourage scholarship within their communities.<sup>12</sup> There were more educational opportunities in the antebellum North, but black children were usually forced to attend segregated "colored schools." Some of these schools received public funding, but most were reliant on local philanthropy or black fundraising to survive.<sup>13</sup>

From the beginning, Sacramento's black community demonstrated a strong commitment to education. The city's black population was evolving into an increasingly family-dominated community, a trend reflecting the larger patterns of early post-gold-rush California. The 1850 federal census noted 206 blacks or mulattos residing in Sacramento. By 1855 black delegates at the first state convention of colored citizens reported that the city had at least 500 black inhabitants.<sup>14</sup> While the Sacramento city school board wrangled with county officials over public school funds in 1854, black teacher Elizabeth Thorn



Elizabeth Thorn Scott became the first black schoolteacher in Sacramento when, in 1854, she opened the town's first school for black children. With no public monies dedicated to school buildings or teacher salaries for the black community, Scott, above, held classes at St. Andrew's African American Episcopal Church (pictured elsewhere in this issue), and parents supported her through their private donations. Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.

Scott opened a private "colored school" for the community's children. Scott's school was housed for a short time at St. Andrew's African Methodist Episcopal Church on 7th Street between G and H streets. When Elizabeth Thorn Scott married Isaac Flood, she retired from teaching and the school closed for several months.<sup>15</sup>

In April of 1855, black abolitionist Jeremiah B. Sanderson, newly arrived from Massachusetts, reorganized the colored school in Sacramento. *Colville's Sacramento Directory* noted that there were twenty-eight students enrolled in his "school for colored persons," with an average attendance rate of twenty-two students.<sup>16</sup> Local parents joined Sanderson to form a Colored School Committee, raising money for the school by then located at the corner of Fifth and O streets.<sup>17</sup> Sanderson and the committee of parents relied solely on private donations to support the fledgling school.

Jeremiah B. Sanderson was educated in New Bedford, Massachusetts, one of the few cities in the



On the heels of Elizabeth Scott, the Reverend Jeremiah B. Sanderson arrived in Sacramento from Massachusetts in 1855 and immediately helped Sacramento's black parents gain educational services for their children. Sanderson, who reopened the black school, later taught at segregated schools in San Francisco and Stockton. *Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.*

nation to support integrated public schools. Throughout the 1840s Sanderson was active in the anti-slavery movement in Massachusetts, sharing speaking engagements and corresponding with prominent abolitionists Frederick Douglass, William Wells Brown, and William Lloyd Garrison. In 1854 he emigrated to California to look for better financial opportunities.<sup>18</sup> His own experience in the integrated public classrooms of New Bedford must have

influenced his decision to request assistance from the local government institutions.

Sanderson recognized that private funds could not reliably sustain the school, and on June 19, 1855, he appealed to the Sacramento city school board for financial assistance.<sup>19</sup> This action, supported by the colored school committee, may have been inspired by the report of the Sacramento County grand jury, published in the *Sacramento Daily Union* on May 7, 1855. Reviewing the condition of the city and local government services, the grand jury recommended "the establishing of a school fund for the benefit of colored children, provided no such fund now exists."<sup>20</sup> This recommendation suggests that county officials recognized the growth of a substantial black community in Sacramento and perhaps acknowledged black interest in education.

On June 19, 1855, board member Dr. John F. Morse officially presented a petition on behalf of the colored school to the Sacramento city board of education. The school board established a committee to review the issue. Minutes from the school board meetings do not list the members of this group, but Morse must have been involved because on August 18, 1855, he delivered the recommendation that the school board request an amendment of the city charter to allow appropriations for Sanderson's colored school.<sup>21</sup> The *Sacramento Daily Union* approved this move by the school board because "the surest and most sensible way to depopulate our prisons is to extend the field of education."<sup>22</sup>

Although Sanderson's petition to the school board has not survived, it is possible to surmise some of the basic arguments it contained. An important component of Sanderson's argument would have been the role of education in the development of moral, responsible adults. In the only known communication from the colored school committee, black parents promised Sacramento residents that "they shall witness [education's] good effects, in rendering our children intelligent and worthy men and women."<sup>23</sup> Several years later in a speech celebrating the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, Sanderson demonstrated his own belief that education was so important that it "must be affused as light, air, water, to all."<sup>24</sup>

While black parents proclaimed an interest in the powers of education as an uplifting force, they may have also argued that excluding their children from public schools was unjust. Historian David Tyack maintains that "during the nineteenth century, no group in the United States had a greater faith in the equalizing power of schooling or a clearer understanding of the democratic promise of public educa-





Native New Yorker and Sacramento storekeeper Mark Hopkins, shown ca. 1850s, voted with others on the city council to overturn Mayor James English's veto of an amendment in 1855 that authorized funding for the education of black children. Hopkins had acted on behalf of other blacks in 1852, when his black servant alerted him to a fugitive-slave incident in Placer County. A militant anti-slavery leader, he was also one of a handful of founders in Sacramento of the state's Republican party. In the 1860s, Hopkins, along with other Sacramento businessmen and anti-slavery leaders Charles Crocker, Collis P. Huntington, and Leland Stanford, became the major builders of the Central and Southern Pacific Railroad system. *Courtesy Bancroft Library.*

tion than did black Americans."<sup>25</sup> Black delegates at the state colored conventions of 1855 and 1856 expressed their anger over paying taxes for services not accessible to them. At the 1856 convention, delegates formally resolved that "the common law, and the common school, are the only hope of a free and enlightened people; . . . and no people can be prosperous and happy who are deprived of these inestimable rights of God to Man."<sup>26</sup> The fact that Sanderson petitioned the school board, rather than continuing the drive for private donations in support of the school, suggests Sacramento black community members' insistence on claiming rights within existing white-dominated community institutions.

On September 10, 1855, the school board's recommendation regarding an amendment to the city charter was delivered to the Sacramento City Council. The recommendation was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, composed of councilmen Washington Meeks, David Meeker, and Ledyard Frink. By September 27, the councilmen submitted a proposed amendment to City Charter Ordinance No. 245, "An Ordinance for the Establishment and Regulation of Free Common Schools Within the City of Sacramento." Amendment 47 stipulated that

All common schools in this city shall be public and free to all white children residing within the respective district, . . . and provided further, that nothing contained in this ordinance shall be construed so as to prevent the Board of Education from establishing one or more schools for colored children, if in their opinion, they deem it expedient.<sup>27</sup>

After some debate over limiting the amount of funding for the colored school to no greater than the taxes collected from Sacramento's black community, the amendment passed as first proposed, by a vote of four to two. Meeks, Meeker, and Frink of the Ways and Means Committee were joined in the majority by Councilman Mark Hopkins.<sup>28</sup>

The contest over Amendment 47, however, was not yet over. On October 8, 1855, councilmen J.P. Hardy and Caleb Hayden registered a protest with the City Council and enlisted a strong ally to their position. Consequently, Mayor James L. English vetoed the amendment, which was then returned to the council for reconsideration.<sup>29</sup> Both the mayor and the dissenting councilmen contended that amending the city charter to permit funding the colored school would offend white residents of Sacramento. Hayden and Hardy submitted their own protest, also signed by Councilman D.S. Woodward, declaring that "there are hundreds of poor parents, who, from conscientious [*sic*] scruples, would be driven to let their children go uneducated rather than to educate them on a common ground with a race acknowledged by all to be their inferior." The councilmen warned fellow citizens that, if the amendment passed, Sacramento would be forced to "open wide the doors of our generosity and provide for the education of Kanakas, Chinese and Diggers." These Sacramento city officials argued that blacks—and other minorities, for that matter—did not hold any claim to public funds because they were "inferior and useless" residents of California.<sup>30</sup>

On October 22, 1855, the Sacramento City Council again took up the argument over the proposed

amendment. Councilmen Meeks, Meeker, and Frink delivered a vigorous rebuttal to Hayden and Hardy's protest, announcing that if parents did indeed pull their children out of public schools because of the amendment, "such children will receive the deepest commiseration of all sensible people on account of the misfortune of their parentage." More importantly, the councilmen recognized the justice of allowing black residents to benefit from the very fund their taxes helped support. The councilmen concluded that they "cannot overlook the further fact that the colored part of our population for a number of years past have been paying taxes, a portion of which has gone to the education of the children of our own race." Councilmen Charles Crocker, Henry Polly, M.S. Hurd, and Mark Hopkins joined Meeks, Meeker, and Frink to override the mayor's veto and pass the amendment.<sup>31</sup>

The chairman of the colored school committee, George Fletcher, publicly thanked the council for "giving the Board authority to furnish to colored children free common school instruction," but although the board now had authorization to appropriate funds to the colored school, it was under no obligation to do so.<sup>32</sup> Jeremiah B. Sanderson recognized the partial victory of Amendment 47. Writing later, he stated "we have got an ordinance . . . through much tribulation for a separate school. Here we are in the condition to take the half loaf; we have 'Hobson's Choice!'"<sup>33</sup> The colored school committee hoped that the charter amendment would provide school funding on a regular basis, but in actuality, by the language of the amendment, the colored school was still a private school dependent on the "benevolence" of the Sacramento city school board. In fact, the ways and means committee argued in favor of amending the city charter, citing the "unimpeachable discretion" of the school board.<sup>34</sup> In the next few years, indeed, the school board used this discretion repeatedly to deny funding to the colored school.

Despite the passage of Amendment 47, funding of the colored school remained controversial. Council members J.P. Hardy and D.S. Woodward resigned soon after the vote, citing their disapproval of the charter amendment.<sup>35</sup> In the following years, the school board debated the actual amount of taxes black residents paid, refusing to pay to the school any more than the amount these residents paid in school taxes. The *Sacramento Daily Union* noted that the rate of taxation for the public schools in general did "not produce the money enough to pay the amount due the school fund." Facing a severe deficit in the local school fund in 1856, the board voted to impose a



Providing a period of stability for parents and children in the black community, Mrs. Julia Folger, a Caucasian, taught at the Sacramento Colored School from 1859 to 1867. *Courtesy California State Library.*

monthly tuition fee of one dollar and fifty cents on all public school students. State funds also augmented local taxes to support white-only public schools.<sup>36</sup> Because Sacramento school officials declined to support the colored school beyond the amount of money estimated to be the local tax levied on black city residents, the colored school was still essentially forced to rely on black community-generated funds.

Sanderson's strong leadership of the colored school appealed to both the black parents' organization and the Sacramento city school board. The school board granted Sanderson a teacher's credential on October 13, 1855, after he passed an official examination. On April 1, 1856, the board appropriated \$150 to the colored school. A month later, the board also voted to provide Sanderson with \$25 per month.<sup>37</sup> But in the summer of 1856, Sanderson left Sacramento to pursue other opportunities in El Dorado County, and with his departure, the colored school committee struggled to keep the school open.<sup>38</sup> The school board never designated the money appropriated to the colored school as a teacher's salary, but refused to provide any funds unless "a qualified teacher appears."



On June 27, 1857, school officials voted to rescind the \$25 dollars allowed to the school, and on May 23, 1858, the board refused to pay any money to the school unless black parents hired a certified teacher. During the 1850s, public school teachers in Sacramento earned between \$80 and \$120 per month, far more than the black community could afford to pay, even with school board assistance.<sup>39</sup> With Sanderson's departure, the colored school committee found it difficult to hire other capable teachers who were willing to work for a reduced salary.

Despite the problem of retaining teachers for the colored school, black parents worked diligently to maintain a school for their children. In 1858 and 1859, the colored school committee held festivals to raise money for the school, now located at O Street, between Ninth and Tenth streets.<sup>40</sup> Emily Allen, Persila Yantis, May Joseph, Maria Caldwell, Rebecca Gibbs, and Jane Ware, members of the colored school committee, had purchased the east half of the second lot on this block for \$400 on June 11, 1858. The women subsequently transferred the deed to the "trustees of the school for colored children of Sacramento." These trustees included Edward Allen, F.G. Barbadoes, and R. A. Hall, all noted black community leaders in Sacramento. The women specified that the lot be used only for school purposes and that any future sale or transfer of the title must be done with unanimous agreement of the trustees.<sup>41</sup> The *Sacramento Daily Union* approvingly reported of the colored school committee's efforts, commenting that "an object more worthy than the advancement of popular education cannot be conceived." Nevertheless, after the 1859 fundraiser, the *Union* warned black parents that despite the \$86 raised for the school, "unless payments are made regularly the school must be discontinued."<sup>42</sup>

After employing a number of teachers temporarily, the colored school committee finally managed to hire a white teacher, Mrs. Julia Folger, in the spring of 1859 and petitioned the Sacramento school board to subsidize her salary.<sup>43</sup> On October 31, 1859, the board agreed to provide \$50 per month to Mrs. Folger.<sup>44</sup> Six months later, the school board voted unanimously to officially designate the colored school as a public school, directing that the school "shall be used exclusively for colored children of both sexes, and shall be taught by a female teacher."<sup>45</sup> The school board's decision to include the colored school within the city system of public schools meant that Mrs. Folger's salary, although still less than that of other public school teachers, was provided regularly by the school board and was no longer dependent on the amount of taxes paid by black residents of Sacramento.

In April of 1860, the *Sacramento Daily Union* reported enthusiastically on the progress of the colored school. "The heads of the colored families in our city," the paper observed, "constitute a considerable proportion of the taxpayers, and they are entitled to a good school for their children." The *Union* noted that despite the fact that many of the students "worked for their daily bread," the level of scholarship was commendable. In fact, the visiting members of the board of education pronounced the examination "the best one that has yet been held in any of the schools this term" and singled out students Ellen Dorsey, Anna Yantis, and Lucy Caldwell for medals based on academics and conduct.<sup>46</sup> Later that year, during the annual examination of the public schools, the *Union* again commended both the students at the colored school and their teacher. The newspaper's reporter declared that "in addition to going as a teacher where most people would have an objection to going, because the school is composed of colored children, Mrs. Folger is teaching for one half what the other teachers receive. This act, in our estimation, stamps her as a true woman."<sup>47</sup>

In his annual review of the city schools, Superintendent F.W. Hatch reported that forty-one children were registered at the colored school, with an average attendance rate of thirty students.<sup>48</sup> Now that the colored school was nominally under the jurisdiction of the Sacramento city board of education, the school received more attention. The board of education donated some used furniture to the school in June 1860, and at a meeting in December approved a bill for repairs. However, since the school board only officially assumed responsibility for the teacher's salary, the colored school committee remained financially obligated to provide the lot and school house, as well as all necessary school supplies and wood to heat the building during winter months.<sup>49</sup>


Ironically, it was a growing fear in the white community that public schools might admit non-white children into local classrooms that inspired state legislation sanctioning the use of state funds for separate schools. In 1858, State Superintendent Andrew Jackson Moulder condemned "the Negrophilist school of mock philanthropists" who intended to "introduce children of Negroes into our public schools on an equality with whites." Moulder sponsored legislation, subsequently passed in 1860, making it illegal to admit "Negroes, Mongolians, and Indians" to common schools. While Moulder's pronouncements were decidedly racist, the 1860 legislation did offer some hope to black Californians because, for the first time, local authorities were legally permitted to grant public funds to separate schools. These sepa-



The segregated colored school was an important predecessor to integrated classes, approved in 1894, such as in this turn-of-the-century image of white and black schoolchildren at Sacramento's Marshall School. *Courtesy California State Library.*

rate schools could be funded with public money, however, only if there were no complaints from the white community.<sup>50</sup> Blacks were again receiving a "half loaf," but the 1860 state law did allow their education in public schools, albeit segregated, for the first time.

In the first decade after the California Gold Rush, black residents fought to claim access to the state's fledgling public school system. Urging blacks to continue to fight discriminatory education laws in 1857, Peter Cole advised them not to "shove the education question out of sight this year. Without knowledge, we shall always be fools, but just as soon as we know how Jacob does his Hic Hoc, we can presto him!"<sup>51</sup> Black interest in schooling showed an appreciation of the individual intellectual benefits derived from knowledge, but Cole and his audience also regarded education as a means to participate in mainstream

white institutions. By 1860, black residents of Sacramento had carved a foothold into the local public school system. With full access to community schools still several decades away, blacks served notice on the white community of their intent to be recognized as members in full of the California public. 

*See notes beginning on page 296.*

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# Not Quite Paradise:

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN LOS ANGELES THROUGH 1950

*by Rick Moss*

In 1857, Supreme Court Justice Roger B. Taney remarked in the matter of the fugitive slave, Dred Scott, that black men had no rights that white men were bound to respect. It is remarkable that the kind of racial arrogance that would allow Taney to make such a statement exists almost 140 years later. Recently, presidential hopeful Robert Dole, in his effort to make history a campaign issue, challenged historians to write "true history," and to abandon the "false theories" of the "embarrassed-to-be-American" crowd. What is the true history? For the non-European ethnic groups whose contributions to western history have been overlooked or ignored, a *true* history remains to be written.

Commenting on this prolonged oversight, Dr. William King underscores this point by saying, "People generally write history to glorify their accomplishments or to justify their conduct. What grows up is an official history that is not always correct and [is] overly dependent on one perspective. If you are wed to a deficit theory of history you will always see people of color and women as bit players."<sup>1</sup> Thus, much remains to be written on the multi-ethnic history of the West. Virtually every aspect of African American life and history in the West requires further research and documentation—politics, class and community formation, differential migration, and economic opportunity are but a few. The lack of a written comprehensive history of African Americans in California hinders an appreciation for the breadth and depth of that experience. Many of the records that would assist in the documentation of that experience have been lost, or remain undiscovered, unidentified, and uncollected—forgotten until someone is given a reason to remember. Perhaps these few pages will remind us, at least, of the legacy of African Americans in Los Angeles.

### EXPLORATION AND EARLY SETTLERS, 1521–1850

People of African descent share a centuries-old relationship with the state of California beginning with the Spanish exploration and settlement of Alta California from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. After their conquest of the Aztecs in central Mexico, 1519–1521, the quick military and economic achievements of the conquistadors encouraged a policy by the Spanish Crown for continued expansion to the north and west. Eventually, the Catholic Church, through the mission system, became the political agent for the Crown in northern Mexico and Alta California.<sup>2</sup> Missions were at least partially effective in subduing and assimilating native Americans on frontier borders. With military support from the presidios, the missions deterred raids on the Spanish interior and also intervened to control some unauthorized colonial encroachment on Indian lands and communities.

Persons of African or mixed African ancestry figured in the Spanish settlement of California, which began in 1769. On June 3, 1771, Father Junípero Serra presided over the burial at the Mission San Carlos of Ignacio Ramírez, a mulatto. Ramírez had been a crew member of the *San Antonio*, the ship that brought Serra to Monterey.<sup>3</sup> Actually, it was not unusual to find blacks and mulattos in the various maritime and military expeditions originating from Spanish Mexico (New Spain) to its northern frontiers. During the three-hundred-year Spanish colonial period (1521–1817), the 200,000 African men and women brought to Mexico were dispersed throughout the territory according to labor needs.<sup>4</sup> The concentration of Africans and mixed-bloods along the seacoasts was so great that some visitors believed the Africans exceeded the native population. Among



This 1909 photograph shows a meeting of the first black branch of the Los Angeles YMCA in progress. Leading citizens from the Los Angeles African American community who were members included Thomas A. Greene, Sr., first executive secretary, seated in the first row, second from the right. *Courtesy Miriam Matthews.*

the six bishoprics of Mexico in 1748, there were 646,570 Spaniards, 2,586,280 mulattoes and Africans, and 3,879,420 natives.<sup>5</sup> The large number of Africans, proximity to the indigenous inhabitants, and the lack of European women naturally led to the mingling of blood across racial lines. Over time, the changing racial demography allowed persons of low social standing or caste status significant opportunities for upward social mobility. Perhaps more than any other group, mixed-blood Africans exploited the permeable boundaries of New Spain's evolving racial hierarchy.

People of African descent similarly participated in the life of Los Angeles from its very founding. By 1781, when California's Governor Felipe de Neve ordered that a pueblo be established somewhere between the mission at San Gabriel and the Santa Barbara presidio, the amount of African blood circulating in the general Mexican population was significant. Captain Fernando X. Rivera recruited

twenty-four families of farmers, artisans, and cattlemen in Mexico. He offered each family, "cash, supplies, tools, animals, clothing, a limited period of no taxation, and access to land." Twelve families came from Sinaloa, where one-third of the population was of African descent. Many came from the village of Rosario, where according to the census records, two-thirds were mulatto.

The colonists departed Alamos in February 1781. Arriving overland at Mission San Gabriel seven months later, they were quickly quarantined for one month, as a precaution against their spreading smallpox. In September 1781, this group of forty-four *pobladores*, or settlers, established the colony, *Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula*, near the Los Angeles River. The *pobladores* quickly established town lots, set aside for cultivation and pasturage. Within a short time the town became self-sufficient and no longer required supplies from Mexico. By 1800 the town had become the





Pío Pico, governor of Mexican California (1845–1846), is shown ca. 1852 with his wife, Señora María Ignacia Alvarado Pico. Her niece, María Anita Alvarado, is seated to her left. Trinidad Ortega, Pico's niece, sits nearest her uncle. *Courtesy Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.*

largest settlement in Alta California. Twenty-six of the founding 44 settlers had African ancestry. Thus, from the town's most humble origins, people of color were active participants in the development of Los Angeles.<sup>6</sup>

This activity continued throughout the early settlement period. Manuel Camero, an original settler, was elected *regidor*, or council member, from 1781 to 1816. Francisco Reyes served as the first *alcalde*, or mayor, from 1793 to 1795. Tiburcio Tapia served in the provincial legislature in 1827, and again in 1833. He also served thrice as mayor and once as a judge. Born in the Mission San Gabriel in 1801, Pío Pico grew to become a prominent Mexican citizen in the years before and after American occupation. From 1845 to 1846 he served as the last Mexican governor of California. Under U.S. rule, Pico served on the Los Angeles city council. Claims of Pico's African ancestry remain controversial. However, the *Estado*, or census, of 1790 recorded his grandmother, Jasinta, as a mulatto.<sup>7</sup>

The *Estado* of 1790 officially lists only twenty-two people of African descent in Los Angeles, but the record of the contributions of Afro-Mexicans to Los Angeles's history belies this figure. Several Afro-Mexicans received from the Spanish colonial admin-

istration large land grants to encourage agricultural development in the region. The Pico brothers, Pío and Andrés, for example, obtained a large tract of land between the San Fernando Valley and Lompoc. Bartolo Tapia's holdings lay near Topanga Canyon, and Manuel Nieto's property lay in the eastern San Gabriel Valley. By 1820, María Rita Valdez, a descendant of Luís Quintero, an original *pobladore*, owned the Rancho Rodeo de Las Aguas, in what is today the city of Beverly Hills.<sup>8</sup> The owners of large ranchos prospered due to the lucrative trade in cattle, hides, and tallow.

The previous discussion is not meant to imply that life for dark-skinned people was idyllic. After all, the majority of black people in New Spain had originally been brought in as slaves. It is equally incorrect to suggest that any of the mixed-blood Africans publicly identified themselves as "black," or privately reveled in the knowledge of their African past. According to Professor Quintard Taylor, "in 1783 Spanish King Charles III began to issue documents titled *cedulas de gracias al sacar* to individuals of African heritage to 'cleanse' persons of 'impure origin,' principally Indians and Africans. Such cleansing afforded legal if not social equality to holders of the certificates. By 1795 such certificates were sold

rather than simply conferred upon worthy individuals. Few individuals of African ancestry could afford to pay the 700 pesos to change their racial status from *pardo* (half-black/half-Indian) to *quinteron* (one-eighth black/seven-eighths white) and 1,000 pesos to move from *quinteron* to white . . . official recognition of the ability of individuals to purchase a new racial identity encouraged others to assert a higher status and allowed Spanish officials to ignore or blur the various categories."<sup>9</sup>

An examination of the historical record of both the Spanish and Mexican eras in California demonstrates that racial classification was not the sole criterion by which social or personal achievements were measured, but this should not be taken to suggest that it was unimportant. Contemporary Sir Don Pedro Alonso O'Crouley, in *The Kingdom of New Spain, 1774*, observed that "it is known that neither Indian nor Negro contends in dignity and esteem with the Spaniard; nor do any of the others envy the lot of the Negro, who is the most dispirited and despised. Many pass as Spaniards who in their own hearts know they are *mullatos*, and those known to be such are sometimes, more leniently, called *pardos* just as Negroes are sometimes called *morenos*."<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, at the end of Mexican rule in California in 1846, more than half the black people in California were of mixed ancestry. The type of rigid social discrimination based on race that was developing in the U.S. failed to take root in the complex multiracial society of Spanish and Mexican Californian before 1850, principally because there was no practical way to enforce it. On September 9, 1850, however, California became the thirty-fifth state to join the Union. Under the American flag, laws that governed relations between the races in the rest of the country would also now be imposed on California.<sup>11</sup>

#### MANIFEST DESTINY AND BEYOND

In September 1849, California's provisional governor, General Bennett Riley, called delegates to Monterey to draft a state constitution. Almost immediately, the delegates raised the issues of the exclusion of slavery and restrictions against the immigration of free African Americans to California.

Before 1850, not counting *californios* of mixed ancestry, there were fewer than twelve black people living in California. The census of 1850, however, lists 962 blacks in a total population of 75,000. That number increased to 2,200 by 1852, and in 1860, it was 4,086. Attracted to the state by the lure of the gold strike, most free African Americans settled in the gold-bearing regions of northern California. Only four counties in the entire state had more than

one hundred free African Americans resident any time during 1860.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, it was the presence, not the relative size, of the black community that alarmed many non-black Californians.

The justification for the theft of Indian land and the defeat of Mexicans in the Southwest and California was rationalized by the concept of Manifest Destiny. Manifest Destiny reached its peak during the mid-1800s, coincident with the Gold Rush and California's entry into the Union. It infected white Americans with a kind of religious zeal to conquer and occupy the entire North American continent because they believed it was what God had ordained. The reality of course, is that individual economic interests, rather than nationalistic fervor in the form of Manifest Destiny, was what urged most settlers westward. Free African Americans came to California for many of the same reasons that other Americans came. In many respects, the frontier that California potentially offered free African Americans and recently escaped or emancipated slaves hope and a chance for a fresh start.

But things would not be easy for blacks in California. In 1852, the California legislature passed its version of the fugitive slave law. According to this law, any slaves who had entered the state before 1849 who refused to return with their masters to their state of origin could be thrown into prison. In April 1851, the California Statutes declared that any person having one-half or more Negro blood could not testify against, or in favor of, a white man in a court of law. This law was devastating to the African American community, leaving it defenseless against all manner of vile and unscrupulous individuals.

Organized efforts by African Americans to counter California's discriminatory statutes began in 1852 with the formation of the Franchise League of San Francisco. The league gathered the signatures of white and black San Franciscans who were opposed to the testimony law. However, the attempt to introduce the petitions to the state legislature was unsuccessful and was treated with disdain by many of the state's elected representatives.

In November 1855, the first state Convention of Colored Citizens was held in Sacramento. The purpose of the inaugural gathering, and subsequent conventions, was to develop effective strategies against all forms of discriminatory legislation. The Reverend J.B. Sanderson, a highly regarded educator and advocate for equal rights, was elected secretary to the convention; Mifflin W. Gibbs, businessman and publisher of the state's first black newspaper, and Philip A. Bell, editor of the *San Francisco Elevator*, the official newspaper of the convention, were just a few of the prominent persons in attendance. Gibbs even-



tually left the state in 1858 with other disenchanted black Californians to settle in Vancouver, British Columbia, but not before he had helped to organize the convention and to found the state's first black newspaper. For all the excitement generated by the convention, its efforts had little effect upon the state's legislature.<sup>13</sup> Not until 1862, with the passage of the Perkins Bill, did a Republican-influenced, Civil War-era legislature grant African Americans the long-sought-after right to testify in court.

Most of the social and political activity among black Californians before the 1880s occurred in the north, where most new African American settlers lived. By comparison, the state's southern half during this early period experienced a less contentious coexistence between the races. The 1850 census identified only fifteen blacks in Los Angeles: four Afro-Mexicans, ten African Americans, and one Guatemalan. This number increased to 62 in 1860, 93 in 1870, and 102 in 1880.<sup>14</sup> Despite their comprising a small percentage of the total population, there was limited African American achievement in Los Angeles during the later nineteenth century.

Early pioneers included Peter Biggs. Biggs, an early settler in Los Angeles in 1847, arrived with his master, Captain J.A. Smith from Liberty, Missouri, during the Mexican-American War. Gaining his freedom after the conflict, he appears in the census of 1850, along with his Mexican wife, Delores Balezuela, and their daughter, Juana Margarita. Biggs made his living as a barber and earned additional income from the rental of his wife's property on Spring Street. Other pioneering African Americans in early Los Angeles included John and Dora Ballard, Lewis G. Green, and Jessie Hamilton.

Robert Owens particularly figured prominently in the history of early Los Angeles. Arriving in 1852 after gaining his freedom in Texas, Owens soon became the prosperous owner of a business that supplied the U.S. Army's local lumber and livery needs. He bought several properties in what is today downtown Los Angeles and opened a livery stable that his son, Charles, helped to manage. Before his death, Owens was known as the wealthiest black person in Los Angeles county.<sup>15</sup> Biggs and Owens are important because they show both the connections between African Americans and Mexicans in early Los Angeles and the considerable opportunities for economic achievement that was available to enterprising black people in a somewhat racially tolerant environment.

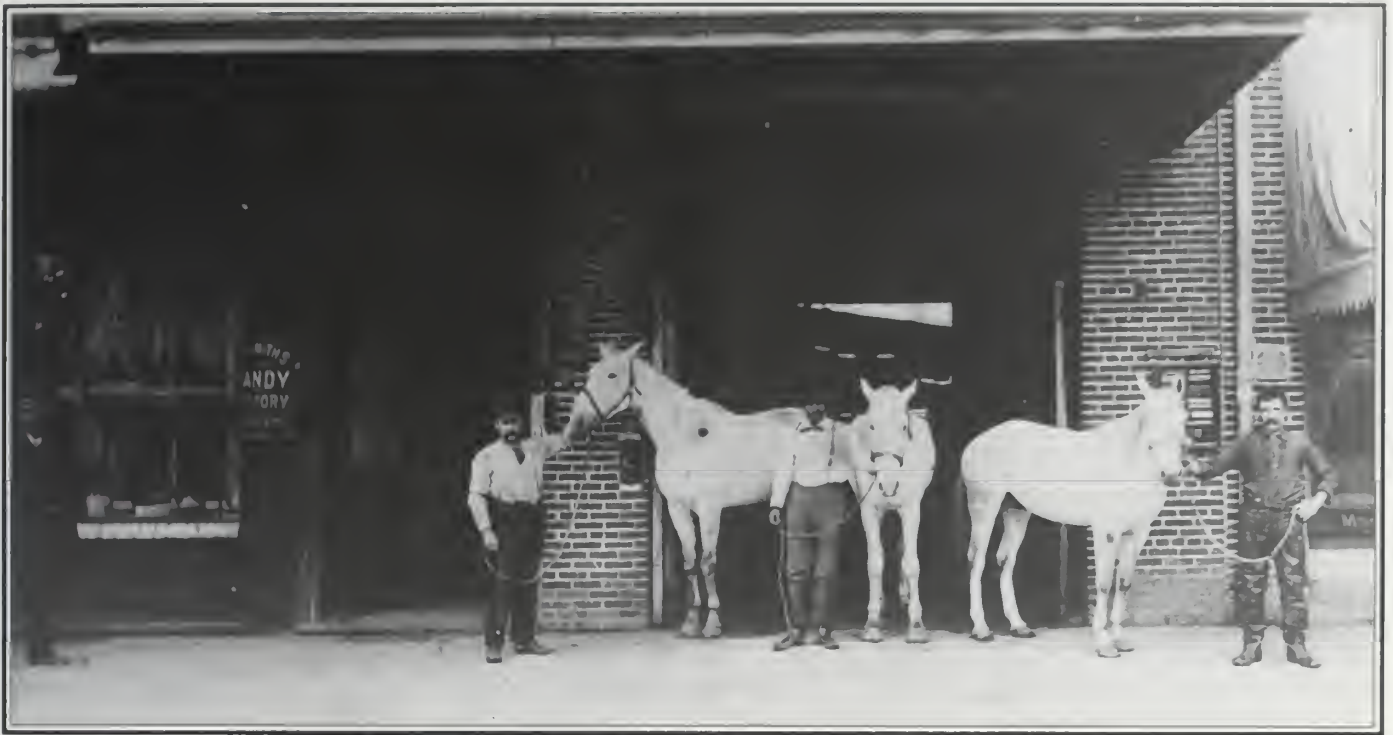
After spending half her life as a slave, Biddy Mason, for example, gained her freedom following a famous trial in which she, with assistance from sympathetic whites and blacks, sued her master,



Biddy Mason, above, came to California as a slave from Texas in 1851, accompanied by her three daughters, Ellen, Harriet, and Ann. They were freed by the courts in 1856. The indomitable Mason died in 1891 at the age of seventy-three. *Courtesy Miriam Matthews.*

Robert Smith, when he tried to take her family back to Texas from San Bernardino in 1855. California was a free state, and the court ruled that Smith had forfeited his proprietary rights to Mason when he entered the non-slaveholding state of California. The presiding judge, Benjamin Hayes, ruled that the state constitution, by prohibiting slavery, emancipated all slaves brought into the state.

Making the most of her new-found freedom, Biddy Mason became a highly respected midwife and on November 28, 1866, purchased two parcels of land, on 3rd and 4th streets and between Spring and Broadway from Buffum and Associates for \$250. She built a two-story brick building at 331 South Spring Street, with two store rooms on the lower floor and living space on the second story. She spent much of her time and money on community and philanthropic endeavors assisting those less fortunate than herself. During the floods of the 1880s, she instructed the neighborhood grocery store at 4th and Spring streets to feed and clothe all victims of the flood. Mason paid all of the bills. In 1872, Mason established the First African Methodist Episcopal church.<sup>16</sup> When she died in January 1891, she left a legacy of achievement, and her obituary in the *Los Angeles Times* read, "These years have been filled



The Owens Livery Stable, located near First and Main streets, opened in the early 1890s. The stable was one of many properties owned by the descendants of Los Angeles pioneers Robert Owens and Biddy Mason. Henry Owens (center), whose father was Robert Owens's son and whose mother was Biddy Mason's daughter, stands with two white employees. *Courtesy Miriam Matthews.*

with good works and we are sure she has been welcomed into the better land with the plaudit, 'well done!'"<sup>17</sup>

Mason's accomplishments are remarkable given the limited economic opportunities available to women on the male-dominated frontier. Social pressure against women striking out on their own during the nineteenth century was considerable. The opportunities that women in general sought were those offered mainly in budding urban areas like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento. Women who did not wish to break with traditional roles as mother, cook, or housekeeper experienced perhaps their greatest chances for success on the urban frontier, instead of the mining frontier, where, for example, women were rarer and the available opportunities less wholesome. Thus, in a relative sense, the frontier west offered to free blacks a greater chance for economic mobility.<sup>18</sup> But, as in other parts of the country, social limitations were placed on black entrepreneurial activities. According to Doug Daniels, no more than 5 percent of San Francisco's black population was in business at any time during the nineteenth century. Moreover, "black entrepreneurs were usually confined to running second-hand shops, repair shops,

house-cleaning, barbershops, restaurants, saloons and boarding houses." Competition from other immigrant groups willing to take the lowest-paying labor forced the majority of black city dwellers to work for even less.<sup>19</sup> Although Mason's encounter with the liberating influences of the urban frontier as a free woman of color was unexpected, she nevertheless capitalized on the circumstances and rebuilt her life in a manner unattainable by most Americans of the period, let alone an ex-slave.

#### THE NEW NEGRO: THE CHALLENGE OF A NEW CENTURY

By the time of Mason's death in 1891, although Los Angeles's total population was much smaller than that of its north-state rival, its black population (1,258) had grown so that it approached that of San Francisco (1,847). The land boom of the 1880s had attracted many newcomers, and southern California employers solicited black labor. In 1885, the Southern Pacific Railroad hired 150 blacks to replace Chinese laborers. Pío Pico invited one hundred African Americans to work as waiters at the Pico House in downtown Los Angeles. Companies such as the California Manufacturing Association needed



experienced cotton pickers to work in the fields near Bakersfield. Then in 1903, the Southern Pacific brought in additional thousands of southern blacks, some to compete with Chinese and Mexican railroad workers.<sup>20</sup>

The image of California as paradise was reinforced in the minds of thousands of wide-eyed southern blacks by the testimonials of returning soldiers, advertising promotions of the citrus industry, and reports in the black press. Black sleeping-car porters, maids, and cooks employed on the Santa Fe or Southern Pacific railroads became familiar with Los Angeles as the terminal point of their journey. For many it was, literally and figuratively, the end of the line. The prospect of an improved quality of life in California was a compelling reason for families to move west. A price war between the two competing railroads further aided a significant black migration out of the South and the East. The response was so great that by 1920 at least 15,000 African Americans called Los Angeles their home.

The period between 1900 and 1930 has been called the "golden era" for African Americans in Los Angeles. Under the southern California sun, energies were directed toward individual fulfillment and

community development. A dynamic new black leadership began to assert itself, and it was not long before a nascent bourgeoisie, complete with its complement of lawyers, ministers, teachers, and businessmen and women was created. An important characteristic of this group was its commitment to providing mutual support and overlapping memberships in important social service and political organizations. Among these, the Afro-American Congress, the Los Angeles Forum, Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, and the Sojourner Truth Club served the African American community.<sup>21</sup> Members of these organizations prided themselves on being good "race" men and women, that is people who were conscious and proud of their ethnic heritage. The *Liberator* and the *California Eagle*, two early black newspapers, were published by two politically active "race" men, J.L. Edmonds and John Neimore. In 1918, Frederick M. Roberts became the first African American to serve in the state Assembly, as a Republican representing the 43rd Assembly District. His opponent distributed campaign literature that read, "My Opponent is a Nigger!" Nevertheless, Roberts was elected with the support of both black and white Angelenos. Given



Black ranch hands employed on E.J. "Lucky" Baldwin's Rancho Santa Anita in the San Gabriel Valley east of Los Angeles in 1886. Courtesy Security Pacific Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.



The Afro-American Congress of California, a statewide organization, met in Los Angeles in August 1896. *Courtesy Miriam Matthews.*

the possibility of home ownership and steady employment, Los Angeles was indeed paradise gained for many African Americans.<sup>22</sup>

However, the honeymoon was surprisingly brief. Originally tolerant racial attitudes toward the developing African American community hardened beginning in the 1920s, an especially violent period for race relations in America. Popularly held beliefs about race and fears of racial mixing were exacerbated during this decade, as both sides squared off to contest jobs and living space, especially in cities. Bloody race riots erupted in northern and mid-western cities, with casualties occurring on both sides. In the South, the sport of lynching was zealously pursued as an effective means to keep blacks "in their place." Membership in organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, which supported a "superior race" ideology, rose dramatically. By 1924, the Klan was active in California, and Los Angeles was affected by this national malaise.

One area of contention involved the use of restrictive real estate covenants to check the expansion of black neighborhoods into previously all-white residential areas. Restrictive covenants were written agreements between white neighbors to rent or sell

property only to other whites.<sup>23</sup> Prior to 1919, courts refused to enforce restrictive covenants, reasoning that the covenants were illegal, and therefore unenforceable by court action. In 1916, for example, in *Title Guarantee & Trust v. Homer Garrott*, a lower court ruled that restrictive covenants were "contrary to the general policy of the law, and contrary to the express provisions of Section 711 of the Civil Code." An appeals court upheld the original ruling. In 1919, however, the Supreme Court set the precedent for a legal battle that would last for thirty years when it overturned the lower court's ruling on the legality of restrictive covenants. Subsequently, the use of restrictive covenants, originally used to deny housing to Mexicans, Asians, and Jews, were increasingly used to bar African Americans.<sup>24</sup>

Additionally, African Americans were discriminated against in the areas of public transportation and recreation. The July 15, 1914, edition of the *Pasadena Star* newspaper reported on a meeting of African Americans to discuss the rule that allowed blacks only limited use of the swimming pool at Brookside Park. In most public pools, blacks and Mexicans were allowed to swim on one day of the week, usually the day before the water was changed.



In another instance, in 1924, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Bruce, the owners of a popular black beach resort, lost their battle against the city of Manhattan Beach, which sought to condemn the property on the pretext that the land was needed for a park. The Bruces lost their court case and were evicted. On Santa Monica beach, an area that had been frequented by African Americans since the 1880s, police chased blacks away from the beach.<sup>25</sup>

Like the African American community in northern California, black Angelenos organized to fight these restrictions. After a visit to Los Angeles during which he urged black Californians to become more active in the fight against racism by joining his fledgling National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, W.E.B. DuBois received a letter from prominent members of the black community. In the letter they expressed the desire to open an NAACP branch office in Los Angeles. By 1914, Los Angeles had its own chapter of the NAACP. Present at the opening of the branch office in the home of Drs. John and Vada Somerville were political activists E. Burton Ceruti, Charles Alexander, John Shackelford, Betty Hill, Rev. Joseph Johnson, and W.T. Cleghorn. Los Angeles's black community was fortunate to have a number of remarkable leaders active during the 1920s and 1930s. Ceruti, an attorney, became the legal counsel for the NAACP. The Somervilles were both graduates of the University of Southern California, and practicing dentists. Betty Hill was a tireless advocate for the responsible and informed use of the ballot among blacks. Hill also waged a continuous fight for the equal employment of African Americans.

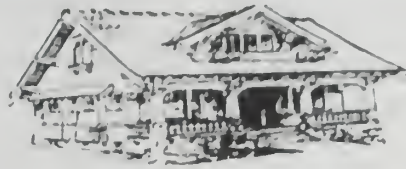
The courageous efforts of African American women like Hill during this period in southern California is sometimes overlooked. Many labored in obscurity, their names and deeds preserved only in family scrapbooks. Yet, it was through the determined efforts of women like Kate Bradley Stovall and Sadie Chandler Cole, a former Fisk Jubilee Singer whose father was a conductor on the Ohio Underground Railroad, that early civil-rights gains were made. Cole, for example, was instrumental in having removed from businesses signs that read "Negroes not wanted," a campaign she was compelled to wage after being denied service at a downtown Los Angeles lunchstand. The journalist Delilah Beasley, to whom Cole recounted this incident, was herself a vigorous advocate for civil rights. An Oakland resident, Beasley fought to end the use of racially derogatory language in newspapers. Charlotta Bass, editor of Los Angeles's *California Eagle*, and Fay Jackson used their newspaper and magazine as forums to expose discriminatory practices.

The offensive business signs that Sadie Chandler Cole vowed to remove, or die trying, were common in Los Angeles before the formation of the local NAACP chapter. Immediately upon being founded, the NAACP began an active defense of this and other African American causes in Los Angeles. An important early victory was won when the organization forced county supervisors to reverse the ban on black students in the training school for nurses at Los Angeles County Hospital. The NAACP later successfully sued the suburban Monrovia School District, forcing the district to provide black students with the same consideration given to Los Angeles's whites, who were allowed to register in and attend Monrovia schools until the city's schools damaged by the 1933 earthquake were repaired and reopened to students.

#### DEPRESSION AND WAR

By the end of the 1920s there were at least five distinct African American neighborhoods branching south and southeast from locations near the site of the original pueblo colony.<sup>26</sup> These neighborhoods swelled with an additional 24,000 migrants during the nationwide economic catastrophe of the 1930s. Newly arriving African Americans squeezed into the few areas of the city where decent residential housing for blacks was already scarce, aiding the formation of black ghettos. As displaced white "Oakies" and "Arkies" funneled into California by the thousands, state officials became uneasy with the steady stream of bedraggled migrants, and established check points along California's border to turn them away. The unprecedented economic disaster strained further the existing tension between the races in Los Angeles. Unemployed whites and blacks often competed for the same jobs with predictable results. Social programs created by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal administration were welcomed by the general populace, but it was still difficult for African Americans to receive fair and equal treatment from the very federal agencies established to assist all downtrodden Americans.<sup>27</sup>

The African American community, however, was not passive in the face of such blatant discrimination. In 1934, Leon Washington, publisher of the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, began a campaign to force largely Jewish merchants along Central Avenue to employ the African Americans who almost exclusively patronized their shops. Washington urged a boycott of all business that refused to hire African Americans. The boycott led not to the hiring of a significant number of African Americans in shops on Central Avenue, but to Washington's arrest for violating a municipal ordinance against picketing.



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"Nowhere in the United States is the Negro so well and beautifully housed, nor the average of efficiency and intelligence in the colored population so high. Here is an aggressive, hopeful group—with some wealth, large industrial opportunity and a buoyant spirit."

"Out here in this matchless Southern California there would seem to be no limit to your opportunities; your possibilities. Why, you will ultimately have so many people here as are now living in six or eight European countries put together.

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"Los Angeles is a composite city, representing all the buildings in New York and all the buildings in Chicago."—*Geo. W. Perkins*, of New York City, speaking on our Commercial Future at the Annual Banquet of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, February 22, 1913.

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We have several of the beautiful homes described by Prof. DuBois for sale at bargain prices, either for cash or on easy payments (\$100.00 down, \$25.00 or less per month until paid), so that the rents will aid you greatly in paying for the property, which you may hold, either as an investment or for a future residence. Also acreage and unimproved lots on easy terms.

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For his newspaper ad in *The Liberator*, early-twentieth-century realtor Noah Thompson quoted W.E.B. DuBois, who called black Angelenos "an aggressive, hopeful group." If the black economy of Los Angeles made home ownership more possible than in other areas of the nation, white reactionaries in the city nevertheless found ways to make it frustrating. *Courtesy Miriam Matthews.*

Disillusionment with the Republican party's response to their plight, and the fact that the Democratic party was responsible for providing relief—however grudgingly—precipitated a major shift in black political allegiance nationwide and in Los Angeles. The Republican party had earned the undying loyalty of the majority of African Americans as the party responsible for emancipation. Although the degree of loyalty had been severely tested since the failure of Reconstruction after the Civil War, African Americans had held rank.<sup>28</sup> But, the Depression-era conditions reflected a differing political reality. "Lincoln freed us, but Roosevelt feeds us," was an expression within the African American community as a proper response to this historic change.

Taking advantage of the Democratic party's new-

found image within the black community, Augustus F. Hawkins entered the race for the California Assembly. During the 1930s, the number of African Americans in California rose from 81,048 to 124,306, and the determination to make effective use of the ballot by putting support solely behind one candidate secured an Assembly seat in 1934 for Hawkins. He became the second African American elected to state office, unseating the Republican incumbent, Frederick M. Roberts, who had held the distinction of being the first African American to serve in the Assembly.

Despite the economic woes that plagued other businesses during the Depression, the entertainment business continued to thrive. The dearth of legitimate means of employment open to African



Americans led some blacks to pursue employment in illicit activities. In the job vacuum created by the Depression, bootleggers, pimps, prostitutes, and number-runners seemed to thrive. For those who could afford it, the Central Avenue strip offered legitimate theaters and night clubs—like the Florence Mills and Lincoln theaters, the Apex, and the Club Alabam—that served a mixed black and white clientele. Some of these establishments were black-owned operations. Others were backed by white gangsters quick to capitalize on the attraction that the black nightlife on Central Avenue had for adventurous whites.

Before the 1930s, Los Angeles was not known for its night life. However, by the end of the decade, previously separate neighborhoods had merged into something that began to resemble a metropolitan community—earning for Los Angeles a reputation as a town that never slept. By the 1940s the transformation was almost complete. Again, as during the Depression, the population had increased dramatically, as people streamed in seeking work in defense plants and other war-related industries. By 1940, more than 50,000 African Americans lived in the city. No part of the city could match the excitement that was generated up and down Central Avenue. Popularly called the “Harlem of the West,” the lively district extended south from downtown Los Angeles past the rural community of Watts. The heart of the strip was Central and 41st Street, home to the Dunbar Hotel and the popular Club Alabam, but it extended to the Plantation Club at Central and 108th streets. On a given evening, one could find hep-cat musicians strolling shoulder-to-shoulder with movie stars, and gangsters rubbing elbows with the common folk.

Though the clientele of the clubs ran from predominantly African American to racially mixed, Los Angeles was little more progressive in terms of race consciousness than other parts of the country. Actress-activist Francis E. Williams and jazz promoter Norman Granz were moved to organize a series of Sunday afternoon interracial sessions because all other popular jazz sessions in the city’s major clubs were off limits to African Americans, except as performers.<sup>29</sup> In other parts of the city some night clubs alternately employed blacks or whites as performers but maintained an admission policy of “whites only.” Such was not the case on Central Avenue.

The Lincoln Theater at 23rd Street was for many years the linchpin of the entertainment scene on Central Avenue. The largest venue for black entertainment west of the Mississippi, the Lincoln opened in the 1920s. In 1928 it was home to the famous

Lafayette Players. In the 1930s, at the Lincoln, most of the major swing bands of the era could be seen, along with a film, for the price of seventy-five cents. In the mid-1940s, it was the site for choreographer-producer Leonard Reed’s stock company of players that included the likes of comedian Pigmeat Markham, Laura Bowman, Dusty Fletcher, and Jimmy Basquette.

In 1928, John and Vada Somerville built a structure at Central Avenue and 41st Street. The Hotel Somerville was an oasis for African Americans who were denied accommodations at white-owned establishments. In 1929 the Somervilles lost the hotel, and it was renamed the Dunbar in honor of the poet, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and it continued to be the social mecca of the black entertainment world. Popular big-band leaders like Duke Ellington, Jimmie Lunceford, Count Basie, dancers like Bill “Bojangles” Robinson and the Nicolas Brothers, and comedian actors such as Eddie “Rochester” Anderson were frequent guests. Next door to the Dunbar Hotel was the fabulous Club Alabam. Founded in the early 1920s by bandleader and drummer Curtis Mosby, the Alabam featured a Cotton Club-style show and musicians the likes of Charles Mingus, Art Pepper, Lee Young, and Roy Porter.

The height of Central Avenue’s popularity coincided with the relocation of the movie industry from New York to Los Angeles. The relatively new medium of film entrenched itself in the mass consciousness of America. Star-struck youth trekked to Hollywood with dreams of making it. That the talent level of most of these would-be stars was minimal was little deterrent. Employment, nevertheless, was plentiful for those who did not become stars. But for African Americans, on-screen opportunities, aside from roles as domestics or jungle natives, were non-existent. Casting offices did, nevertheless, spring up along Central Avenue to supply the demand for black extras. The first appeared in 1919, when James Smith opened the first African American-operated casting office at 12th and Central. In 1924, Smith became the first African American-licensed casting agent. The harsh economic reality was that work as a Hollywood extra, even as a jungle “native,” paid better than most jobs available to black people. Consequently, the work was coveted by many of the unemployed. By employing hundreds of black extras, Hollywood helped finance the modest prosperity along the Central Avenue corridor.

Blacks had been producing films as early as 1910, when William Foster produced the one-reel comedy, *The Railroad Porter*.<sup>30</sup> But the release of D.W. Griffith’s racist epic, *Birth of a Nation*, in 1915 taught African Americans that they would have to be responsible

for countering the film's negative images by producing the kind of movies that portrayed black people in a kinder light. Hollywood simply would not. In 1916 Noble M. Johnson, Clarence Brooks, and Dr. J.T. Smith organized the Lincoln Motion Picture Company in Los Angeles. Their first film designed to uplift the race, *Realization of a Negro's Ambition*, appeared that same year. Reaction to the furor within the African American community caused by Griffith's epic film also led in 1926 to the creation of a militant group of black Los Angeles professionals and community leaders called the Ink Slingers. The Ink Slingers, vocal critics of Hollywood film producers for continuing to project negative black stereotypes in films, were in turn inspired by Loren Miller, who was well known for his political activities on behalf of African Americans.<sup>31</sup>

Questions and concepts of racial identity formed the subjects of most black-cast films before 1940. Emphasis on these themes may be traced to the pioneering efforts of the Lincoln Motion Picture Company, and to African American producers like Oscar Micheaux. For the next several decades, these considerations continued to be a prime concern of black films. As the decade of the 1930s ended, the tradition of so-called "problem films" began to fade from the screens of the approximately six hundred theaters nationwide devoted to the showing of black-cast films. The reasons were subtle, but the motivating factor for the shift seems to have been major changes in the areas of discrimination and prejudice. With the Depression fading, mainstream filmmakers could afford to relax the prohibition on the social issues contained in their films. The federal



Founded in 1914, the NAACP Los Angeles chapter attracted many among the city's black leadership. Here, board members pose at a meeting in July 1923. Included in the group are attorney and Mrs. E. Burton Ceruti, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Cole, the Honorable and Mrs. Frederick M. Roberts, Mrs. Beatrice Thompson, and Mrs. Lula Slaughter. *Courtesy Miriam Matthees*



government was also partly responsible for the premature departure of many independent black filmmakers in 1941, when wartime vinyl rationing made this vital raw material scarce and unavailable. Black producers, for whom financing was always a major problem, could no longer afford to make films.

Increasingly, genre black-cast films mirrored those that were being made by the major Hollywood studios for predominantly white audiences. The tired themes of "passing" and prejudice that were characteristic of many early black-cast films were replaced by detective stories, comedies, westerns, musicals, and horror films.<sup>32</sup> In 1937 Herb Jeffries starred in the first black-cast musical western, *Harlem on the Prairie*. Independent black-cast films returned briefly from 1945 to 1948, before their disappearance.

Just as the Depression had served to stimulate a wave of migration to California in the 1930s, the beginning of World War II had a similar, and even greater, effect. Unlike the Depression, there was plenty of work available, and many African Americans were able to secure employment. In 1942, California Shipbuilding and Consolidated Steel hired more than six thousand African Americans. Yet, even in the boom environment of the 1940s, African Americans were treated as second-class citizens in the workplace. De facto segregation and a severe housing shortage conspired to deflate the hopes of the most optimistic African Americans.

Union resistance against the employment of African Americans prompted A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, in 1941, to threaten a march on Washington unless President Roosevelt acted to protect black job rights. In June 1941, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, to "promote the fullest utilization of all available manpower and eliminate discriminatory employment practices." The Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) was also formed to monitor compliance with the order.

As a result, more African Americans found jobs in the defense industry. The FEPC, however, did not have the power to eliminate the kind of racism that seemed endemic to the skilled trades professions. In some cases, after having been hired, African Americans were denied union membership. They were instead encouraged to form separate auxiliary units as affiliates of the parent unions.<sup>33</sup> Also, in the factories and shipyards, black employees could expect to receive the most menial or dangerous work assignments. Despite continued pressure by the NAACP, FEPC, and local leaders, the unfair treatment continued. The concerns of African Americans for a national reconciliation over civil-rights issues were low priority to a nation at war with fascism. It

would be twenty years before the federal government would decisively pass legislation guaranteeing civil rights for all Americans, and have the will to begin to enforce it.

A prejudiced reality notwithstanding, the war years were prosperous years for many black Angelenos. One result of this prosperity was an increase in the number of potential African American homebuyers. Those who sought to purchase property outside the traditional black neighborhoods, however, encountered resistance from the real estate industry and white homeowners.

#### RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

In 1943, eight white families, organized under the name West Adams Improvement Association, tried to remove about thirty black homeowners from the Sugar Hill area of Los Angeles. Among the owners were movie stars Hattie McDaniel, Louise Beavers, and Ethel Waters. The movement of African Americans to the nearly all-white area of Sugar Hill and the immediate vicinity had begun in the mid-1930s. Before that, the district, formally known as West Adams Heights, with its aging mansions, had been occupied by wealthy industrialists and bankers. The Depression made it impossible for many of the residents of West Adams Heights to live on in the style to which they had become accustomed, and many were forced to sell their impressive homes. In an effort to maintain the racial integrity of the all-white neighborhood, restrictive covenants that forbade the selling of property to African Americans and other minorities were often used to discourage integration.

After discovering that covenants protecting several homes in the area had expired, Norman O. Houston, president of the black-owned Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company, purchased his home at 2211 Hobart. However, alarmed white residents rushed into circulation a petition that would "re-covenant" the entire area until the year 2053. The effort failed, at least partly because a few owners were anxious enough to sell to anyone with the money to buy. Sugar Hill had become a location favored by African American professionals who were unable to purchase property elsewhere in Los Angeles. White homeowners obtained court injunctions against Houston, Beavers, McDaniel, and others to prevent them from moving into their homes. Two years later, the case was dismissed by the Los Angeles superior court.

In 1948, Loren Miller, the NAACP attorney who had been such an inspiration to the Ink Slingers in the 1920s, appeared before the United States Supreme Court to argue against the legality of



An African American resident surveys the construction of a new, restricted housing tract in Los Angeles, ca. 1940s. Courtesy Southern California Research for Social Studies Library.

restrictive covenants. On the matter, in *Shelley v. Kraemer*, the Supreme Court ruled that real estate covenants were a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment and judicially unenforceable. Five years later in another ruling, the court outlawed restrictive covenants. On the eve of the modern civil-rights movement, black Angelenos scored a direct victory over bigotry and racism. This triumph underscored the fact that by the end of the second world war, Los Angeles's African American community was, perhaps, the best organized community against discrimination in the country. In so doing, it continued a tradition begun by the first *pobladores* and sustained by succeeding generations of black residents steadfastly determined to make the California dream their California reality.

Today, after almost four decades of being one of the most dynamic ethnic groups in the development of Los Angeles history, the African American community is faced with the reality of a shrinking constituency and impending political impotence. Over the last ten years, sweeping demographic change has transformed traditionally African American neigh-

borhoods into areas that are predominantly Latino. A direct consequence of this rapid change, conflict between these two groups, and between blacks and the rapidly growing population of Asian immigrants, is increasing in frequency and level of violence.<sup>34</sup> It is ironic that many black Angelenos find the presence of the newest immigrants so threatening, when just a few decades ago the shoe was on the other foot.



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Rick Moss is curator of history at the California African American Museum in Los Angeles. He develops and manages multimedia programs designed to meet the statewide need for the acquisition and preservation of African American material culture. He serves as a consultant in the design of historical exhibitions and programs, writes for historical and museum publications, and lectures on California history.



# W. ELMER KEETON AND HIS WPA CHORUS: Oakland's Musical Civil Rights Pioneers of the New Deal Era

by Michael Fried

On a cool August evening in 1937, the ornate Alcazar Theater, home to the San Francisco Federal Symphony Orchestra, filled with soaring voices singing not only Scarletti, Schubert, Massenet, and Purcell, but also America's true indigenous musical masterpieces—Negro spirituals.\* That night, the Bay Area discovered a virtuoso choir of classical musicians, all of whom came from the black churches and music studios of Oakland and Berkeley. William Elmer Keeton's Northern California WPA Negro Chorus was one of hundreds of ensembles sponsored across the nation by the WPA Federal Music Project as part of President Roosevelt's daring program to lift America out of the depths and despair of the Great Depression. Keeton and his choir were pioneers who made cultural, musical, and social history in California as they successfully challenged our country's long, painful legacy of "separate and unequal."

The early twentieth century was the period of the Harlem Renaissance, a time of extraordinary creativity in black artistic expression. In music, Roland Hayes was breaking the color bar as a classical concert singer. Yet even before the Depression, trained black musicians had found that their incomes were becoming increasingly precarious for several reasons. In 1900, there were over five thousand theaters in the country, and the black entertainer seemed omnipresent. Blacks had owned or operated a large number of these theaters in major cities. As long as theaters provided the major source of entertainment for the American people, agencies assured black entertainers regular employment. The old minstrel tradition of singing spirituals in the theater had created employment for even more musicians. There was also the vaudeville circuit, as well as jobs for black musicians as accompanists for theater acts

and silent movies. The sound-movie industry and the appearance of sound technicians, however, put many musicians out of work. Due to the rapid rise of radio and sound-film, there were fewer than two hundred live-entertainment theaters by 1940. Musicians also felt the economic crunch in music schools, which reduced their faculties. In addition, private music teachers found their classes dwindling. The 1930s had ushered in a period of gloom and despair for the majority of black artists. As the Great Depression worsened, artists found themselves competing with unskilled laborers for manual jobs.

In September 1935, under Roosevelt's New Deal, \$5 billion was allocated to the WPA. Of this, a minute, but still significant portion, less than one percent, was devoted to the arts. Within three months, the Federal Theater, Music, Art and Writer's projects were launched throughout the nation as part of the WPA. In California, some 23,000 men and women participated in these professional projects. This initiative broke new ground in public policy and represented the first major public effort to deal with unemployment among creative artists and performers and to bring theater and music to the general population. The New Deal's WPA Federal Arts Program was the instrument for an unparalleled flowering of indigenous American culture and excellence.

W. Elmer Keeton's chorus, also known as the Oakland Colored Chorus, was locally initiated and recruited mainly from members of the east-bay black community who were professional and amateur singers. Beyond the demise of the WPA, it continued as a leading presenter of choral music to northern California audiences, illuminating both the riches of the African American tradition in Keeton's own a cappella arrangements of spirituals and the virtuosity of black performers in the European-American classical tradition.

## BEGINNINGS

William Elmer Keeton had been born on Valentine's Day, 1882, in Rolla, Missouri. His father, Rev. Calvin

\*This article, adapted by the author's television script, *Sing It, When You Can't Tell It*, is made possible by a grant from the California Council for the Humanities, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



By 1939, three years after its first public appearance, the Elmer Keeton Chorus was drawing large crowds. One of its most successful presentations, "Run Little Chillun," shown here, opened at San Francisco's Alcazar Theatre in 1939 and played to sell-out crowds for nearly a year. *Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.*

M. Keeton, was a district superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His mother, Elizabeth, was a member of a prominent central Missouri family. While young Keeton was attending the segregated public schools of St. Louis, 1,700 miles away in Alameda, Berkeley, Oakland, and Richmond, African Americans were building their own black institutions and working toward ending de facto, as well as legalized, discrimination in northern California. Like their white counterparts, early black immigrants were resourceful, ambitious people drawn to the Golden State by the lure of economic gain while fleeing racism and slavery.

What they found, while not the Promised Land, was still often an improvement over what they had left behind. Yet black Americans were never willing to settle for the relative freedom California offered as long as they were treated as less-than-full citizens.

When the Southern Pacific Railroad ended its transcontinental route in Oakland, the nucleus of a larger black community formed. Black men were hired as porters on Pullman cars and later for other railroad work. They were required to live in West Oakland, near the railway's terminus. The black press reported the increased activity of African Americans in the east bay:

West Oakland is beginning to resemble a bee hive of industry among the colored population. Barber shops, hotels, coal yards, grocery stores, tailor shops, restaurants, club rooms, etc. are among the numerous enterprises of that portion of the Athens city.<sup>1</sup>

California offered more freedoms and in many ways was better to blacks than the South had been, but it was far from an idyllic world. As historian Shirley Ann Moore recounts, "as early as 1909, devel-



opments were going up around the Bay Area that sold themselves as restricted communities, and you had these restricted covenants placed in contracts. So there was this veneer, this undercurrent, of violence and anti-black sentiment. Yet you had, comparatively speaking, a black community that was small but felt that their spatial boundaries were much wider."<sup>2</sup> Former Keeton choir lead tenor Alfred O'Neill observed that "in the South the white people didn't hide their prejudices. We understood white people in the South. In fact we knew more about white people than they knew about us... You felt better in the contacts that you had with the white people here in California, but they held back their prejudice from showing out front. But your opportunities were limited. You could only go so far, and you couldn't get permanent employment."<sup>3</sup>

Back in the Midwest, Keeton's father had planned for him to study medicine, but instead Keeton studied music at Northwestern University, near Chicago. He was one of the first African Americans admitted to this academic citadel, earning a doctorate with honors. From college Elmer enlisted in the 9th Cavalry at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, and became band

master. On his return to St. Louis, he became a church organist for two prominent black congregations.

The 1913 West Coast tour of black scholar-activist W.E.B. DuBois sparked the movement to found an NAACP branch in the Bay Area. A northern California branch, with its headquarters in Oakland, was established in 1915. That same year D.W. Griffith's racist cinematic landmark, *Birth of a Nation*, made its San Francisco debut amid an outraged black citizenry. During the film's release, the Ku Klux Klan applied for a charter in California. The NAACP swung into action, joined by the newly formed Negro Equity League, the Negro Welfare League, and the Equal Rights League. The Oakland chapter of NAACP, under the leadership of Walter A. Butler, led protests at the McDonough Theater. Letters objecting to the film were sent to the *Oakland Tribune*, and the NAACP obtained a court injunction to prohibit the theater from continuing to screen the film. The growth of the Bay Area's NAACP, partly in response to the racist movie, was one of the fastest in the nation. Its leadership reflected the new militancy among blacks.



Among their shows at the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island, the Elmer Keeton Chorus, above, with Keeton, center, performed in the Festival of Negro Music. Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.

America's entry into World War I in 1917 created a severe labor shortage just as Oakland was beginning to attract federal shipbuilding contracts and private industries to its waterfront. As a result, some industrial and civil service jobs opened to blacks. But actors, musicians, and music teachers still constituted the majority of San Francisco's black professionals in 1920. Delilah Beasley, Oakland's crusading black journalist, observed at the time that "with but few exceptions, all the avenues of trade are closed to the Negro workman through the powerful influences of trade unions who rule San Francisco."<sup>4</sup>

#### A TIDE OF BLACK NEWCOMERS

In 1921, the year the state of California finally banned *Birth of a Nation* from circulation, Elmer Keeton made his fateful migration from St. Louis to Oakland. He opened his first music studio at 1364 Ninth Street, advertising in the *Western Outlook*, which was destined to become part of black-press baron E.A. Daly's Oakland-based newspaper monopoly. Keeton offered instruction in piano and organ, and courses in music theory, harmony, counterpoint, forum, analysis, history, composition, and instrumentation. He was virtually a one-man conservatory.

Two years later, a young C.L. Dellums joined the growing tide of newcomers to Oakland and found his life's work organizing black workers, while becoming one of California's great civil rights leaders.

The post-World War I east-bay African American community was a vibrant blend of experienced, successful old-timers, whose families had been in the West for several generations, interacting and competing with questing new migrants determined to grab hold of their place in the northern California sun. As historian Shirley Ann Moore observed, "the newcomers' voice and cultural expression—their drive and determination—really invigorated the whole scene. Longtime black residents said that these newcomers were uncouth, unsophisticated, not knowledgeable about how to get along in the city. Yet here they were taking the lead in establishing these very institutions that were going to fight against racism and fight against segregation. They said, 'We were Jim Crowed down South, we didn't come to California to be Jim Crowed!'"<sup>5</sup>

Preceding Keeton's arrival in the east bay by one year was Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). A charismatic advocate of black self-help, Garvey moved on to work for black nationalism, separatism, and ultimately the creation of a black homeland in Africa. In Oakland,

UNIA Local No. 188 purchased "Liberty Hall," which still stands at Chester and Eighth streets, where regular meetings, rallies, dances, and concerts were held. In Oakland, the UNIA published *The Ethiopian Digest* as the official organ of its Pacific Coast branches.

Music was an important part of the culture that Garvey constantly urged blacks to develop. He saw music as a potent tool for raising the level of black consciousness. In 1926 Keeton established his Music Academy at 887 Thirty-third Street. He pursued his passion for music one step further in 1928 by joining with like-minded S.E. Boucree to establish the Keeton-Boucree Art Studio at 8th and West streets in Oakland. There, assisted by Boucree, he provided an arts education center for students in piano, organ, and aesthetic dancing. Within a short time, these two visionaries were recognized throughout the Bay Area for training in choral music, piano, organ, aesthetic dancing, and concert performances of opera. Professor Keeton, or "Fess," as he was called by his students, held recitals three nights a week, writing original music for the programs.

#### CHURCH, MUSIC, RACE, AND CLASS

Because blacks had been excluded from so many areas of the larger society, they were forced to create a world for themselves in which they could fulfill their needs, including artistic expression. Ethnomusicologist Jacqueline Cogdell Dje Dje has noted that "blacks had no access, either as audience member or performer, to the music hall, the symphony, nor to many of the things that were available to and for whites and others in the larger society. As a result, they developed their own institutions, events, and opportunities in which they could be actively involved. Because the church was one of the few institutions within black culture that did not have interference from other groups, it became a major focal point for not only social and political activities in the black community, but for artistic expression and events as well. The church was a place where blacks received training and performed within the arts. It also provided an environment for critiquing individuals within artistic endeavors. The church became the primary focal point for very much things that were artistically inclined, primarily because of the exclusion within the larger society."<sup>6</sup> Duke University professor emeritus C. Eric Lincoln wrote in *The Black Church in the African American Experience* that "black Christianity preaches a gospel of deliverance, the reality of a vivid flesh-and-blood Jesus and the urgency of spiritual rebirth . . . But black belief also insists that social and eco-



conomic liberation is part of the gospel. The story of black singing is a story of how black people 'Africanized' Christianity in America as they sought to find meaning in the turn of events that made them involuntary residents in a strange and hostile land."

While continuing to teach private students, W. Elmer Keeton became organist and choir director for Oakland's historic First African Methodist Episcopal Church, the east bay's first all-black church, established in 1858, and also organist and choir director at St. Augustine Protestant Episcopal Church. He eagerly threw himself into a whirlwind of accomplished music-making. He directed the Etude Musical Club in a concert broadcast from Hale's radio station in San Francisco, organized the Muse Art Club, which performed a light opera at St. Augustine Presbyterian Church in Oakland, and accompanied the internationally renowned black violin soloist, Clarence Cameron White, in recital. Through countless musical teas and dinners for the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, he raised \$8,000 for a long-sought pipe organ for First AME Church. Additional choirs at Oakland Baptist, Beth Eden Baptist, Cooper AME Zion, and other prominent churches came under his direction. In a historic first, he successfully presented Frederick Von Flotow's grand opera, "Martha."

#### BLACK PARALLEL INSTITUTION BUILDING

Paralleling Keeton's prodigious artistic output during the 1920s, the roaring decade was filled with innovation and progress in the African American communities of the east bay. After World War I, automobile, shipbuilding, and other industrial employers continued to hire black workers, although usually in the least-skilled and lower-paid jobs. Civil service employment began to increase through growing black political leverage, providing reliable pay, pension, and status.

The 1926 national convention of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs in Oakland was a major event that raised community awareness—especially the astonished attention of white club women—to the sophistication and talent of black women throughout the east bay. The Fannie Jackson Coppin Club, the oldest black women's club in northern California, established the first black children's orphanage, which survives today as a city of Oakland childcare center. It was this club that discovered the great black tenor, Roland Hayes, long before he triumphed in Europe. Hayes would exert a profound influence on Keeton and his WPA Choir. The Alameda County League of Colored Women Voters spearheaded the successful drive for

black women to be admitted to Highland Hospital's nurse-training program. A small group of black women also organized the Linden Branch YWCA, while several black ministers founded the Market Street YMCA. Both Ys became full-service community institutions for black Oakland. As increasing numbers of black students gained admission to the University of California at Berkeley, such sororities and fraternities as Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, and Omega Psi Phi became important catalysts for social, cultural, and political gains.

Blacks no less than whites were seduced by the baseball craze of the 1920s. The games of the all-black Oakland Pierce Giants were social events where blacks intermingled, wore their finest attire, and cheered for their heroes. Sports unified the black community and played a galvanizing role in the acculturation of black youth just as sports had galvanized European immigrant communities in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Black baseball players brought the same unique transformational artistry to America's pastime as their brothers and sisters brought to America's music.

#### DEPRESSION

In 1929, the east-bays expansion came to a screeching halt with the onset of the Great Depression. Overnight, the American dream became a nightmare. For blacks in California and nationwide, the impact was devastating. For them, "Last hired, first fired" became a cold, cruel reality. Statewide, black families were forced to seek "relief" at a rate four times that of whites and double that of other non-whites. Nor were middle-class black families immune. Successful dentists, doctors, and lawyers were lucky to get chauffeuring jobs or domestic work. To add outrage to injury, *Birth of a Nation* was revived in California. Despite the efforts of the NAACP and a multiracial coalition, a wounded and vulnerable black community could not persuade the state to intervene. East-bay black institutions and individuals struggled to extend help on an unprecedented scale, but local efforts alone were not enough. California's governor, James Rolph, Jr., who had been San Francisco's mayor for nineteen years, provided little leadership. He had no idea how to cope with massive unemployment and poverty. Keeton, for one, refused to accept defeat, and he turned to music to help uplift black spirits. In 1930 he organized a spiritual quartet, which performed on radio station KFWM on Thursday evenings from 10 to 11, on "Keeton's Brown Variety Hour."

The painful larger question that President Franklin Roosevelt's administration faced was whether black

American citizens would fully participate in its programs for economic recovery. Was this a New Deal or a New Bluff? The early days of the new president's term did not inspire confidence among blacks. As one New Dealer admitted, it was easy to hide behind the overwhelming economic crisis. "We weren't concerned with civil rights because there was so much more to worry about," he remarked. The omission of race from the New Deal agenda was simply business as usual. Americans fooled themselves into thinking that the race problem was a southern, rather than a national, problem.

At the outset, Roosevelt's innovative "alphabet soup" of federal agencies, such as the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) and the NRA (National Recovery Administration), continued to treat blacks like second-class citizens. The secretary of agriculture, Henry Wallace, was certainly no supporter of blacks, and for African Americans, the acronym NRA took on such terms as "Negro Rights Abused," "Negro Removal Act," and "Negroes Ruined Again." Langston Hughes captured the disillusionment of blacks in lines from his "Ballad of Roosevelt":

I can't git a job  
And I can't git no grub  
Backbone and navel's  
Dom' the belly-rub-  
A-waitin' on Roosevelt,  
Roosevelt, Roosevelt

And a lot o' other folks  
What's hungry and cold  
Done stop believin'  
What they had been told  
By Roosevelt,  
Roosevelt, Roosevelt.

Cause the pot's still empty,  
And the cupboard's still bare,  
And you can't build a  
bungalow  
Out o' air-  
Mr. Roosevelt, listen!  
What's the matter here?

As the Depression deepened, however, Roosevelt was forced to become bolder.



Through his Oakland Music Academy, established in 1926, and as organist and music director of several churches, W. Elmer Keeton was a prominent Bay Area musician long before the WPA provided funds for special music programs. One of Keeton's first goals was the purchase of a pipe organ for First African Methodist Episcopal Church. Here, Keeton (back row, center) and his WPA chorus pose in 1935 before the Alameda-built organ at the church. *Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.*



## THE WPA

As Ruth Acty, a member of Keeton's ensemble, remembers about the Thirties, "there were no jobs available. Here I was, this black woman, in the middle of the Depression, no money, my parents were dead. I earned my way by teaching piano to little children, four and five and six-year-old children that no other teacher wanted to teach, in some woman's home, and she would let me give a recital every year."<sup>7</sup>

In part to assist and to preserve the skills of artists like Acty, the Roosevelt administration launched a \$5 billion work-relief program, and in 1935, Congress established the Works Progress Administration, known as the WPA. FDR made Harry Hopkins its director. They both understood that "hunger is not debatable." The WPA's job was not only to keep people alive, but to put them to work doing what they were trained to do. Twenty-seven million dollars was funneled into what was called Federal Project Number One, which included the Federal Music, Art, Theater, and Writers projects. A WPA administrator explained, "We don't think a good musician should be asked to turn second-rate laborer in order that a sewer may be laid rather than a concert given for the pleasure of our people."

Under the WPA's Federal Music Project (FMP), hundreds of musicians were taken from the labor jobs to which they had been assigned (they made notoriously poor ditch-diggers and clerks) and placed in new units for which their training equipped them. Though initially the musicians were skeptical, they were won over by promises of quality control. Musicians responded promptly when they learned that untalented individuals would be transferred out quickly. They were also attracted by the fact that the FMP aimed to make music an integral part of the community, a permanent civic program.

Recognizing the program's possibilities, Elmer Keeton proudly knocked on the door of the California Federal Music Project, and the door opened. At that time the WPA projects were the only vehicle for large-scale employment of blacks in the arts. For the first time they could learn the craft of stage management, lighting, and other backstage skills closed to them in the commercial theater because of white union restrictions. Even black-owned theaters had to use white stagehands. In black movie or vaudeville houses, only white operators could run projectors and spotlights. But not in the WPA. Keeton gathered together a community of musicians who studied, rehearsed, and made music their life's work. Within a year he had fashioned a choral group of five into a full-scale group of sixty of the Bay Area's finest

## Coloured Choral of the Federal Music Project of Oakland

Elmer Keeton, Accompanist and Arranger  
Marcus Hall, Baritone Soloist

**MONDAY, SEPT. 27, 8:20 P. M.**  
**ALCAZAR THEATRE**

### PROGRAM

#### Theme—

1. Git On Board
2. O Rocks Don't Fall On Me
3. Lay My Burden Down

#### CHORAL

1. Where 'ere You Walk . . . . . George Frederick Handel
2. Der Wegweiser . . . . . Franz Schubert
3. "Promesse de mon avenir" . . . . . Jules Massenet  
from *Le Roi de Lahore*

Marcus Hall, Baritone—Elmer Keeton at the piano

1. My Luv Is Like A Red, Red Rose . . . . . Burns
2. Sweet and Low . . . . . Barnby
3. Farewell To The Forest . . . . . Mendelssohn

#### CHORAL

#### INTERMISSION

1. Bird Songs At Eventide . . . . . Eric Coates
2. Now Sleeps The Crimson Petal . . . . . Roger Quilter
3. For You Alone . . . . . Henry Gecht

Marcus Hall

1. Good News
2. Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child
3. Certainly Lord
4. That's Why Darkies Were Born

#### CHORAL

Note —The Spirituals are sung a capella arranged by Elmer Keeton

Presented by Federal Music Project of Works Progress Administration  
Dr. Nicolai Sokoloff, National Director Miss Harle Jervis, State Director  
Dr. Alfred Hertz, Bay Region Director

This Alcazar Theatre program illustrates the range of music, from classical to spiritual, performed by Keeton and the Chorus, which was also called the Coloured Choral. The program included Keeton, on piano, accompanying baritone soloist Marcus Hall. *Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.*

singers. The group quickly earned a reputation for exploring old and new American works.

Keeton feverishly set to work molding his singers into northern California's premier a cappella choir. Chorus members assembled five days a week for rehearsals at the Masonic Temple. They were paid \$89.70 to \$94 a month, a living wage during trou-

bled times. In no sense were they "relief" clients. By August 1936, Keeton and the choir were ready to dazzle east-bay audiences with concerts combining original arrangements of Negro spirituals with a rich repertoire of Schubert, Debussy, and Verdi. Regarding Keeton's adaptation of the spiritual form to a wider audience, Olly W. Wilson, the noted composer and musical scholar, points out that

Keeton, like other great black composers of the time, continued the tradition of changing the character of the music within the arranged, four-part chorus style, while maintaining the essence of the spirituals. What was important about the Negro spiritual tradition, starting with the Fisk Jubilee Singers, who initially were singing a vernacular folk spiritual, was that they began to arrange, and in doing so, the moment they went on stage, they changed the paradigm and created a new one. The new paradigm was the concert spiritual, which is the idea of taking a folk tradition and simply performing it on the stage and altering it to conform with the necessities of the stage.<sup>8</sup>

The Webster Little Theater at 1608 Webster Street in Oakland was the scene of the first public concert of the Oakland Colored Chorus on August 10, 1936. The program was Keeton's trademark format of a cappella spirituals performed by the chorus, alternating with old German songs sung by Marcus Hall and classical piano solos presented by Eugene Gash, concluding with the chorus in the quartet from "Rigoletto." Ten days later the Federal Music Project presented its Oakland choral groups at the Oakland Auditorium Theater (now Calvin Simmons Theater). The program was one of many Keeton shared with conductor John Fuerbringer and his Choral Ensemble, a white group.

Until World War I, serious American music had been almost completely dominated by European musicians, conductors, and impresarios. This was true despite the nation's love for Stephen Foster, Edward MacDowell, and a few other American composers. Until the turn of the century, most people were too emotionally occupied with material advancement to concern themselves with great music. With the advent of the FMP came the first real public commitment to professionalism in music and support for fine arts as an aesthetic experience. Music in America then became a communal art, as more than twenty-million Americans attended concerts given by FMP musicians. National in scope, the Federal Music Project had a multipurpose goal: to provide employment for needy professional musicians, to involve them in socially useful projects, to preserve their skills by maintaining high standards

of musicianship, and to offer less privileged citizens throughout the nation opportunities to enjoy music. The FMP organized its music project into four major sections: educational, choral, instrumental, and composer's forum. At its peak employment period during the spring of 1936, there were 15,842 persons participating, including instrumentalists, vocalists, composers, teachers, librarians, copyists, arrangers, tuners, and music binders. There were symphony and concert orchestras, bands, chamber music ensembles, dance, theater, and novelty orchestras, choruses, copyists, and vocal ensembles, a composer's project, teachers' projects, grand operas, chamber operas, operetta projects, a soloists project, projects for copyists and librarians, and a folk-song project charged with the preservation of early vernacular music.

Of the four arts projects under the WPA, the music project employed the most people. In 1939, the FMP was transferred from federal to state control and renamed the WPA Music Program. From the FMP's inception in 1935 to its dissolution in 1943, there was African American participation at every level, except at the national executive level. Black participation in the WPA Federal Music Project is by itself an impressive microcosm of the breadth and depth of African American civilization. In northern California, in addition to the Elmer Keeton Chorus, a Colored Women's Choir was established. In southern California there was the Los Angeles Negro Opera Unit, Los Angeles Negro Dance Orchestra, the Halleluljah Male Trio & Quartet, the Southern California WPA Negro Chorus, the Los Angeles WPA Female Negro Chorus, the Los Angeles Federal Colored Band, the Los Angeles Colored String Quartet, and in San Bernardino, both a Colored Orchestra and Chorus. Thomas Jefferson Pruitt, a veteran of Keeton's group still living in Berkeley, remembers the music and its meaning:

In the biblical days, when a slave was held in bondage for fifty years, when he was freed was known as a jubilee. That's where we got the original jubilee singing. The black man's music has been one of the greatest contributions that America has made to the world. The spiritual, jubilee songs, like the Keeton chorus sang, were born with an American soul beaten out on the anvil of experience as [their creators] . . . toiled and looked forward to liberation. These songs were born out of the trials and travails of our forefathers while they toiled and prayed, looking forward to this day we now enjoy called freedom. And the beautiful thing about these songs, you won't find any feeling of resentment or hate, but it's from love.<sup>9</sup>



FDR AS VIRTUOSO POLITICAL ARTIST,  
AFRICAN AMERICANS AS DEMOCRACY'S ARTISTS

*I went to the poll line and voted  
And I know I voted the right way  
So I'm askin' you Mr. President  
Don't take away this WP and A*

—Election Song

While Keeton and his choir were singing songs that spoke of life and death, suffering and sorrow, grace and love, justice and mercy, redemption and conciliation, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, running for a second term in 1936, was practicing the art of partisan politics. To one important New Dealer, civil rights was now a primary consideration. In an administration where race ranked low on the list of priorities, the First Lady stood out as a staunch ally of black Americans, and Eleanor Roosevelt played a crucial role in winning black political support for her husband. A southern governor once told Roosevelt, "We don't really have any Negro issue in the South, Mr. President. It's white agitators from the North who make all the trouble." The president smiled and said, "You mean Eleanor, don't you?"

The irrefutable fact was that the WPA was making a difference in the lives of close to one-million black Americans. No black leader was more responsible for this development than the indomitable Mary McLeod Bethune. At a White House meeting, she made an impassioned appeal on behalf of her people: "We have been taking the crumbs for a long time. We have been eating the feet and head of the chicken long enough. The time has come when we want some white meat." Roosevelt was moved and impressed and decided to ask her to head a newly created Division of Negro Affairs in the National Youth Administration. "Mrs. Bethune is a great woman," he told an aide, "I believe in her because she has her feet on the ground, not only in the ground, but deep down in the ploughed soil."

Bethune's success was so striking that some young blacks believed that NYA stood for "Negro Youth Administration." Roosevelt's greatest selling point to the black electorate was the WPA. The Colored Division of his campaign was told to do whatever they had to to insure his reelection. A special 16-minute campaign film targeted at black audiences was produced, shrewdly titled, "We Work Again." The soundtrack proclaimed:

We were the first to lose our jobs when the Depression came along and the last to get them back. Anxiously we waited, waited for some sign of better days. Then came the Federal Government's work program. One by one, it took us out of the bread line. It gave us a new chance to take a normal place in the

life of our community. It made us self-supporting. It changed the haggard, hopeless faces of the bread lines into faces filled with hope and happiness, for now we work again! Unskilled laborers, the "forgotten men" of past generations, now work steadily at decent wages.

Despite shamelessly smacking of paid political propaganda, the film's message resonated with black audiences. While it was unintended, long before "affirmative action" or "empowerment zones," the WPA programs allowed blacks to participate in the most powerful civil right—economic opportunity.

Former Keeton Chorus lead tenor Alfred O'Neill testified to the fact that black Americans were more impressed with a paycheck than political speeches. "I was more or less interested in the employment end of it, not the political side of it," O'Neill observed. "Roosevelt was right on every move, as far as I was concerned. He could do no wrong. We felt we had a new day coming. We still had the white resentment from the little progress we were making. We ignored most of that. We went about our business. And we didn't suffer so much from the Jim Crow and the disenfranchisements. We forgot it for a while because our way wasn't as clouded. We were employed. We had a little more family life; the children were going to school, they had little school books and were making progress in the educational field. Kids off to college."<sup>10</sup>

Roosevelt almost never made personal appearances before black audiences, leaving those duties to Eleanor. But just eight days before the 1936 presidential election, in a politically calculated departure, FDR gave a speech at the dedication of Howard University's new chemistry building that was broadcast nationwide. The speech bore a striking resemblance to the "We Work Again" script:

At its last commencement, Howard sent forth 245 graduates to join the nearly 10,000 alumni in all parts of the world. Here is a record of which the Negro race may well be proud. It is a record of which America is proud. Its founding many years ago as an institution for the American Negro was a significant occasion. It typified America's faith in the ability of man to respond to opportunity, regardless of race or creed or color . . . As far as humanly possible, the government has followed the policy that among American citizens there should be no "forgotten men," and no forgotten races [thunderous applause]. It seems to me to be a wise and truly American policy, and we shall continue to faithfully observe it.

Roosevelt won by a landslide, sweeping the black vote.

Back in Oakland, the Depression had only fueled



The Keeton Chorus also performed "Swing Mikado" at the Golden Gate International Exposition in 1939. With approximately ten million people touring Treasure Island in celebration of the opening of both the Golden Gate and Bay bridges across San Francisco Bay, "Swing Mikado" proved wildly successful. *Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.*

the zeal of such east-bay black leaders as C.L. Dellums, Tarea Hall Pittman, Walter Gordon, Frances Albrier, and others to continue fighting against discrimination, both subtle and overt. They raised funds and circulated petitions for the Scottsboro Boys, nine Alabama youths condemned to death after being falsely accused of raping two southern white girls. They joined the national movement to pass federal anti-lynching legislation. Dellum's active support for the 1934 General Strike on the San Francisco waterfront had opened the door for black dockworkers to join the Longshoreman's Union, and in 1937 he was elected vice president of the northern California NAACP. East-bay blacks also began to exercise their economic power to combat discrimination in employment and accommoda-

tion. In their "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaign, members of the NAACP, churches, and political organizations picketed businesses that refused to hire blacks and called for boycotts of theaters, restaurants, and the University of California's ASUC Barbershop.

In 1938 Elmer Keeton and his a cappella choir scored two musical coups that catapulted them into the ranks of America's most accomplished and acclaimed ensembles. On Washington's Birthday, with William Grant Still, the country's leading African American concert-hall composer in attendance, they performed Still's famous "Lennox Avenue Suite." That summer they captivated audiences at Stern Grove, San Francisco's outdoor concert pavilion, with a three-part program comprised





Baritone soloist Marcus Hall, above, entertained at the commissioning of a World War II naval destroyer at Kaiser Shipyard in Richmond. Hall, a member of the Keeton Chorus, worked at the shipyard. *Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.*

of works by Dvorak, Rossini, Verdi, original compositions by Keeton himself, and a rousing finale of seven soulful spirituals. They were the first black musical group to perform at the Bay Area shrine of western classical music. "Our specialty is spirituals, which we present in a new view," Keeton said later. "I write the tunes and dress them in a little different clothing using modern harmonies and modern rhythms without destroying the sentiment. We organized in 1936 and we have presented 150 concerts. We have received fan mail from all over the country in regard to our work."

#### THE KEETON CHORUS TAKES THE STAGE

A whole new artistic dimension opened up for Keeton's chorus in 1939, when Hall Johnson selected it to be featured in a west-coast production of his black Broadway hit musical play, "Run Little Chillun." The show opened at the Alcazar Theatre in San Francisco on January 29, 1939, and was an instant success. It displayed astonishing virtuosity by black performers who had never taken part in a professional stage production before. "Run Little Chillun" and the Keeton Chorus were a smash hit, playing to packed houses for nearly a year. As its fame spread, the chorus continued to break new ground. In April 1939, its members participated in "Musical Echoes of Negro Composers," presented by the California State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs at Parks Chapel AME Church in

Oakland. That November, they appeared in the Ninth Universal Thanksgiving Exercises at the Oakland Auditorium, sponsored by the East Bay Religious Fellowship at a time when religious prejudice was widespread and intolerance seemed to be again on the ascendance.

Keeton and the choir were on a blazing-hot streak. They followed their "Run Little Chillun" triumph with a "Swing Mikado" adaptation of the Gilbert & Sullivan operetta, which became a sensational commercial success at the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island. During the Expo, they were also the stars of an unprecedented Festival of Negro Music. They had now become serious money-makers for the federal government's WPA program, breaking box-office records. But Keeton, whose health began to decline, cared only about the music. Thomas Pruitt recalled that "professor Keeton was a master musician. He didn't care a thing about money, he loved his art and it's a shame the world didn't know about a man who gave his all for music. He lost himself within music."<sup>11</sup>

Keeton and the choir criss-crossed northern California, performing not only in concert halls but at state fairs, military bases, schools and universities, parks, churches, and community centers. Their fame spread nationwide, as they began making WPA radio programs broadcast on more than 400 stations coast-to-coast. The late Dr. Lawrence P. Crouchett, founding director of the Northern California Cen-

ter for Afro-American History and Life, offered an insight into the deeper meaning of the Keeton Chorus's performances. "Each concert and appearance had essentially a twofold purpose," he said. "First, blacks needed a means of both protesting their experience and expressing their aspirations, hurts, and interpretations of the assumptions of the majority group. The Keeton choir, through the selections of its repertoire, spoke to the black experience and the suffering imposed upon black people by the larger society. The other purpose of the concerts was to display their musical talent as trained musicians, not just as black people. In the Thirties, questions still existed concerning whether blacks were singing from heart or by memory, and here Keeton's choir was displaying the formal training they had, reading notes and singing according to the musical standards."<sup>12</sup>

Upon America's entry into World War II, WPA projects focused on national defense, and the choir's performances were used to sell war bonds. Blacks played a very important role in keeping the spirit and morale of the men in the armed forces high, as the National Defense Narrative report from the state director in northern California reveals:

The first program presented at Moffett Field, February 26, featuring the Northern California WPA Symphony Orchestra of 100 pieces, and the WPA Negro Chorus of 37 voices, was wildly applauded by the men and most favorably commented on by critics in their columns the following day. Choruses generally, it seemed, are popular with the boys, and the Negro Chorus especially so. Indicative of the enthusiasm aroused was the fact that when the time for intermission arrived the officers begged that no intermission be observed—the men didn't want the music to stop. When the carefully planned concert reached its climax with a presentation of the exciting "Ballad for Americans" the soldiers stood in their places and cheered.

Yet, in the broader world, blacks continued to struggle with inequality, even as they patriotically served their country in the defense industry or the armed forces. Twenty-one years before Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, historic address to the March on Washington, C.L. Dellums and his colleague A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, had to threaten a massive wartime march on the nation's capitol to get President Roosevelt to issue Executive Order 8802 banning discrimination in America's defense plants. A generation before Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his great "I Have a Dream" sermon, A. Philip Randolph delivered a prophetically similar message:

American Negroes, involved as we are in the general issues of the conflict, are confronted not with a choice but with the challenge both to win democracy for ourselves at home and to help win the war for democracy the world over. There is no escape from the horns of this dilemma. There ought not to be escape. For if the war for democracy is not won abroad, the fight for democracy cannot be won at home. If this war cannot be won for the white peoples, it will not be won for the darker races. Conversely, if freedom and equality are not vouchsafed the people of color, the war for democracy will not be won. One can hear such questions asked as these: What have Negroes to fight for? What's the difference between Hitler and that "cracker" Talmadge of Georgia? Why has a man got to be Jim-Crowed to die for democracy? If you haven't got democracy yourself, how can you carry it to somebody else? The March on Washington Movement is essentially a movement of the people. By fighting for their rights now, American Negroes are helping to make America a moral and spiritual arsenal of democracy. Their fight against the poll tax, against lynch law, segregation, and Jim Crow, their fight for economic, political, and social equality, thus becomes a part of the global war for freedom.

#### LEGACY

As the battles for freedom and democracy deepened both at home and abroad, the remarkable eight-year run of the WPA Federal Music Project and of Elmer Keeton and his pioneering black chorus came to a close in 1943. That same year, Ruth Acty, who was featured with the Keeton Chorus in its acclaimed production of "Run Little Chillun," became the first black public school teacher in Berkeley's history. Professor Delores Nason McBroome acknowledges the choir's unique role as a civil rights champion and ambassador. "Elmer Keeton and his WPA Chorus are an example of the platforms of confidence and achievement which the East Bay black community erected in every sphere of life. The Keeton Chorus used their music and their success as a marvelous tool to advance civil rights. They were a cultural complement to the political organizing work of C.L. Dellums, Delilah Beasley, Frances Albrier, Tarea Hall Pittman, and countless others. The choir's impact in the 1930s and 1940s helped pave the way for two of the most significant pieces of civil rights legislation in California in the 1950s and 1960s—the Fair Employment Practices Act and the Fair Housing Act."<sup>13</sup>

More than two dozen black orchestras, bands, and choral groups participated in the WPA's Federal Music Project. Attendance records show that more than 20 million Americans attended WPA live musi-



cal events, and many tens of millions more tuned in on the radio. It has been estimated that more African Americans attended more musical concerts during the lifetimes of the FMP and WPA than at any other time in American history. Historian Lorraine Crouchett points out why this communal music making was so much more than entertainment: "Keeton and the Chorus weren't just singing to the black community. They were also singing a message of freedom and justice to America. They were saying in the music, 'we are just as good as you are!'"<sup>14</sup>

The last movement of William Elmer Keeton's life ended on an elegiac note. His health broken, he spent his final years with the Community Music Division of the city of Richmond Housing Authority. He died on New Year's Day 1947. The choir to whom he had dedicated his most creative years took the name the Keeton Memorial Chorus and carried on for another two decades, making glorious vocal music under the direction of his protégés, Arnold Baranco and Maxine Blackburn.

Keeton's legacy is enormous. His impact in California and on the West Coast paralleled that of Marian Anderson, Roland Hayes, and Paul Robeson at the national level. They each used their people's unique cultural inheritance and their own artistic gifts to nudge American society closer to justice. They each embodied the deepest aspects of the African American aesthetic—continuity, professionalism, persistence, community participation, resiliency, moral fervor, and undaunted spirit.

After listening to rare recordings of the Keeton Chorus discovered in the Library of Congress, Michael Morgan, musical director and principal conductor of the Oakland Eastbay Symphony, observed, "Keeton was a real composer, not just arranging spirituals, but really adding a great deal to them, in the course of making the arrangements. You have a new piece if you consider, for example, that we call a Bach 'Choral Prelude' a new piece when in fact the 'Choral' is an old tune, and all these other things have been written around it. This is exactly the same thing; the melody is old, but most of the trappings around it are really quite new, so if we have the admiration we do when people like Bach did it, we should also have the admiration we do when people of our own time and certainly people like Keeton did it."<sup>15</sup>

Today, more than a century after Elmer Keeton's birth, American institutions continue to justify the disproportionate exclusion of blacks from symphonic and other musical organizations, explaining that African Americans lack an interest in or an aptitude for "classical" music. Keeton and his WPA

Chorus, like many others before and since, eloquently discredited this insidious, but persistent, historical fallacy, as they and dozens of other black quartets, bands, ensembles, orchestras, and choirs sang out to America a message of African American virtuosity and excellence rooted deeply in their communities and their culture. Professor Jacqueline Cogdell Dje Dje offers this commentary:

African American culture or African American people are not monolithic, there is not one kind and there is not one aesthetic, but there is a lot of differentiation. It's a very dynamic community—just like any other group of people have a lot of dynamic elements; it's constantly changing, it's constantly revitalizing itself, sometimes using the old, taking the new—it's just the way in which the culture has existed, and perhaps that's one of the reasons it has survived in spite of all the hardships and the oppressions because it has been extremely dynamic and people have learned to use whatever's available to them, and create something new.<sup>16</sup>


Keeton's musical legacy continues in Oakland and the east bay today—composer Olly Wilson, conductor Michael Morgan, blues pianist Charles Brown, Linda Tillery and her Cultural Heritage Choir, Terrance and Ed Kelly and the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir, Trent Morant and the Oakland Youth Chorus, Emmitt Powell—the list goes on and on. Each is nourished by, and is replenishing, the wide, deep river of African American sacred, spiritual music and its many tributaries. Musicologist Newt McDonald confirms the dynamic nature of this cultural continuum:

The music that's being made today, the music that En Vogue is singing, is connected to what Keeton did. They're a cappella. They come right out of the Bay area, out of Oakland. I can guarantee you that The Pointer Sisters can line a hymn, if they wanted to. When we hear En Vogue singing their a cappella songs, with their arrangements, yes, we can hear Keeton. Yes, we can hear The Fisk Jubilee Singers, and as a matter of fact, many of the young people want to make that connection. That's what sampling music is all about today. The beat goes on!<sup>17</sup>

Sixty years ago, when Keeton and his singers lifted their voices in soaring songs celebrating freedom, equality, and dignity, they were renewing American black music's centuries-old call to, in the words of Langston Hughes's 1938 poem, "let America be America again." Reflecting on the multicultural dimensions of our shared history and inheritance, Itabari Njeri concluded that "as a nation we are more bound to each other than the metaphor of a mosaic, for instance, suggests. We seem more a



W. Elmer Keeton leads the chorus in an outdoor performance at the Woodminster Amphitheater in Oakland's Joaquin Miller Park. *Courtesy African American Museum and Library at Oakland.*

tapestry with a series of patterns . . . African American music, literature, dance and our struggle to extend democracy have been central to that tapestry."<sup>18</sup> The history of Elmer Keeton and his Oakland WPA Chorus is indelibly woven into the multi-textured, many-hued fabric of the California experience unfolding within America's still-spinning story. 

*See notes beginning on page 298*

*Michael Fried is the founder and director of Public Interest Films, devoted to films and television programs on social and cultural issues. His television film, Sing It, When You Can't Tell It, currently in production, is the pilot program for a public television series chronicling the untold stories of the contributions of African American communities and culture to our national life.*





In 1944, two African American welders prepare a ship for launching at California Shipbuilding Company, one of the "Big 3" shipbuilding companies located on Terminal Island in Los Angeles Harbor.  
*Courtesy Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University.*

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# BATTLE ON THE HOME FRONT

## African American Shipyard Workers in World War II Los Angeles

*by Josh Sides*

Three days after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, George A. Beavers, a leader of the Los Angeles branch of the NAACP, stated that "the doors of the defense industries are now practically wide open . . . and qualified workers will be drawn from our group as well as others in increasing numbers."<sup>1</sup> While his prediction was premature by almost nine months, and black workers still faced a great deal of discrimination in industrial training courses, there was a decisive increase in the number of black employees being hired in the war industries in Los Angeles.<sup>2</sup> As news of opportunity spread, African Americans wrote to relatives in Texas and Louisiana about the new opportunities for war employment in the land of sunshine, and by the summer of 1942 a dramatic black migration was under way. But their entrance into the work force brought with it new challenges, the most difficult of which was their struggle against the racist policies of the American Federation of Labor's (AFL) Boilermakers union, the preeminent labor union in Los Angeles's shipyards.<sup>3</sup> Though historians have rightly emphasized the importance of factors such as the wartime labor shortage and federal intervention in achieving a measure of justice for African Americans around the country during World War II—indeed, in laying the groundwork for the civil rights movement of the fifties and sixties—the case of Los Angeles's black shipyard workers suggests that it was the effort on their own behalf that resulted in a dramatic, if brief, victory over the union and the shipyards.<sup>4</sup> Though a labor shortage and the newly established federal Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) propelled black men and women into the workforce, these factors had very little effect on the actual work environment, union policies, or racial hierarchies that emerged in the wartime shipyards. The black men and women who came to work in Los Angeles's shipyards quickly found that improving these conditions would require a concerted effort on their own part to rally other workers in the shipyards as well as important members of the pre-war African American community.

Before the summer of 1942, black migrants represented only a small portion of the war migrants to Los Angeles.<sup>5</sup> Those black migrants who did arrive are more accurately associated with the slow but steady migration of African Americans out of the South dating back to the turn of the century. They were not "war migrants" for the simple reason that there was little war employment available to them. Anti-black racism and a bountiful supply of unskilled white workers, many of them originally Depression-era migrants to California's Central Valley, ensured that employers and unions could stave off, at least temporarily, the question of black labor.<sup>6</sup> Thus, black employment in Los Angeles in the years prior to the war was limited to several arenas. Garbage collection, custodial work, elevator piloting, and postal employment were the primary occupations of Los Angeles's black population.<sup>7</sup> The extent to which the California Dream was denied to African Americans was best exemplified by their lack of access to southern California's booming aircraft industry, which had become a mecca for skilled and unskilled migrants alike. Initially, African Americans were accepted only in custodial positions in the plants, and by June of 1941, there were exactly four black production workers in the aircraft industry in the entire region.<sup>8</sup> Conditions in the shipbuilding industry were similar but initially even less hopeful; because aircraft companies did not have closed-shop agreements, the burden of hiring African Americans fell on management, which was concerned first and foremost with the economic well-being of the company and ensuring that there was sufficient labor to fulfill obligations under lucrative government contracts. As the white labor shortage became more acute, racism became a luxury that the companies could not afford. In shipbuilding, however, all of the major west-coast shipyards had entered into a closed-shop "Master Agreement" in May 1941 by which the companies agreed to hire all workers it required through AFL's Boilermakers union and could only utilize workers who were "members in good standing" of the union.<sup>9</sup> While the economic



well-being of the company was clearly vital for the Boilermakers, they were also concerned about maintaining the integrity of their union, and black membership was not compatible with their vision of the Brotherhood.<sup>10</sup> Though the companies could lay off both black and white workers after the war, the union could not; the Boilermakers knew that to accept African Americans into membership meant that they would remain members after the war was over, and this they could not accept. The national leadership of the Boilermakers had already forced Los Angeles Boilermakers Lodge 92 to accept women into the membership, but they had to take a stand somewhere; they did it along the color line.

Yet the Boilermakers had to contend with wartime exigencies. First, President Roosevelt's Executive Order No. 8802, issued in the summer of 1941, barred discrimination in war industries and became the impetus for many African Americans to migrate to war production centers. Second, and arguably more important, military conscription after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 created a desperate labor shortage. These two factors opened the doors of war industries for African Americans. Having heard about the possibility of new employment opportunities, over 400,000 blacks headed west between 1940 and 1950.<sup>11</sup> Of course, they were only one part of the much larger multiracial internal migration in the United States; between 1941 and 1945 the South lost approximately 850,000 people, while the West saw a net gain of approximately 1,160,000.<sup>12</sup> Between 1940 and 1946, more than 70,000 African Americans moved to Los Angeles, causing a 109-percent increase in the city's black population.<sup>13</sup> Los Angeles was particularly alluring to many of these westward migrants because of its booming military-industrial complex. No industrial area of the United States was more important to the war effort; total war contracts for Los Angeles amounted to more than \$11 billion, and upwards of 550,000 were employed in shipbuilding, aircraft production, and other war-related industries. At their peak, Los Angeles County shipyards employed 90,000 workers, most of whom were employed by the "Big 3" shipbuilding companies in the Los Angeles area: Consolidated Steel's Shipbuilding Division, Western Pipe and Steel Company, and the California Shipbuilding Company (Calship), all located on Terminal Island.<sup>14</sup>

Unable to ignore the urgent workforce need, but unwilling to compromise the integrity of the Brotherhood, the Boilermakers distinguished hiring blacks from accepting them into membership. Thus, as far as hiring went, African Americans became an impor-

tant part of the labor force in Los Angeles. By 1944, they would represent up to 15 percent of the workforce in the "Big 3" shipyards, and there would be more than 30,000 African Americans in defense-related industries in Los Angeles.<sup>15</sup> Calship alone would employ more than 7,000 African Americans. But the Boilermakers would, by no means, accept blacks on equal terms. From its inception in 1880, the Boilermakers adhered to a strict "white-only" membership policy. In fact, the only significant change in this early policy was to transfer the white-only clause from the written constitution to the admission rituals of local institutions, thus allowing the Boilermakers to retain their policy without ever publicly confessing as much.<sup>16</sup>

Acknowledging that the time had come to deal with the question of black labor, the Executive Council of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers (IBB) voted in 1937 to establish "Negro Auxiliaries," confident that such a policy would be "accepted by the . . . Negro workers in a cooperative spirit."<sup>17</sup> From its inception, the "auxiliary" bore little, if any, resemblance to a legitimate union. Among other things, the auxiliary was subservient to the white local with which it was affiliated, had no right to participate in IBB conventions, had no grievance committee, offered limited insurance programs and little hope of job advancement, and conferred no universal rights of transfer. Moreover, its membership was susceptible to punishment for small infractions, like drinking on the job, while white union members were not.<sup>18</sup> In fact, the only similarity between the auxiliary and the white local was that they both paid the same dues. Nonetheless, the auxiliary became the vehicle for the Boilermakers' "compromise" between wartime exigencies and their vision of the Brotherhood.

Thus, at work, the black men and women of Los Angeles's wartime shipyards found themselves constrained by racist policies. To understand their experiences fully, however, one must also grasp the larger set of ethnic dynamics in wartime Los Angeles, both inside and outside the yards. As one black shipyard worker in Los Angeles put it, "the man had me going and coming! There was shit to deal with on the job and shit to deal with in the streets while looking for a job."<sup>19</sup> Like other war production centers in the West and North, Los Angeles became home to an increasingly diverse workforce. By the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Los Angeles had the largest Mexican and Japanese populations of any American city, the largest African American community in the West, and the largest influx of white war migrants in the West. These demographic char-

acteristics dramatically affected the nature of race relations in Los Angeles.

Several historians have suggested that anti-black racism was diffused by the large immigrant, and particularly Mexican, population.<sup>20</sup> Because of this, they suggest, Los Angeles was seen as a mecca for earlier black migrants. Even if this were true, however, wartime conditions had a way of reconfiguring race relations. Several examples suggest the complex web of racism wrought by the war.

In 1944, the ubiquitous Carey McWilliams tackled this issue, arguing that the large influx of black war migrants since 1940 "has completely changed the basic pattern of race relationships on the West Coast:"

Traditionally this pattern was always anti-oriental so that many people did not note that it was essentially a manifestation of race prejudice; that is, they were inclined to regard it as anti-foreign in character. The influx of Negroes has served to expose the essentially racial position of such groups as the California Joint Immigration Committee and the Native Sons of the Golden West . . . . It was my impression that there was much more resentment of Negro migrants than there was of [Japanese] evacuees.<sup>21</sup>

This "resentment of Negro migrants," the director of the Los Angeles Urban League maintained, was a result of the "Southernizing of California":

By this I mean that California is becoming a state as southern in influence as the states largely contributing to its population namely Texas and Oklahoma. On all sides can one sense a general change of attitude toward the Negro, due to the impress of this southern influence on almost every activity within the community.<sup>22</sup>

In Los Angeles, southernization was even more complex. Not only did some new white southern migrants exhibit racial hostility toward African Americans, but the new black migrants of World War II found themselves being placed in an unfamiliar racial hierarchy by both whites and other blacks. Black war migrants were constantly being evaluated and compared to the status of the pre-war ethnic populations, most notably the Japanese, Mexican, and "old black" communities. In December 1943, when the congressional Sub-Committee on Naval Affairs met in Los Angeles, Deputy Mayor Orville R. Caldwell proposed that black war migrants should be banned from entering the city. In support of his contention that "Negroes from the South and Southwest are unassimilable," Caldwell stated:

We have a large Mexican population here. They have been absorbed and we have no trouble with them. The Negro who was born and reared here fits into our picture, but these Southern Negroes are a

serious problem. They don't get along with the Negroes who were born and reared here, nor with the white residents . . . . If this in-migration is not stopped, until such a time as these people can be properly absorbed into the community, dire results will ensue.

Though it is unlikely that Caldwell had his finger on the pulse of black Los Angeles, there was ample evidence to support his assertion that tensions existed between old and new black migrant groups. One NAACP official best summarized the view of the "old-stock" black community:

The southern Blacks, who have moved here in large numbers, haven't helped the situation any. Generally speaking, they have gone from one extreme, that of being almost completely suppressed in the south, to the other extreme, that of taking advantage of comparative freedom by unnecessary bulldozing tactics in their relationship with other groups.<sup>23</sup>

Black critics of the new migrants usually complained of the "southern negro's boisterousness." To be sure, this was not a new phenomenon. One native black Angelino interviewed in the 1930s by Max Bond, a sociologist at the University of Southern California, complained that some local blacks refused to shed their "southernness." Keeping the name of the offending family anonymous, the black resident complained that "we don't know yet about the X family. Their children are clean, but you hear them talk a mile away. They act just like people straight from the depths of the South. They seem to be improving, though: Mr. X doesn't sit on the porch on Sundays in his overalls anymore."<sup>24</sup> Although this fear among black Angelinos of being associated with "more southern" blacks was not new to the forties, what was new was the frequency and force with which black Angelinos invoked it in the face of the new large southern black migrant group. Even when not overtly expressed as above, intraracial hostility took more subtle forms, as in the case of a black community's protest of the construction of lower-income housing for black war workers in their neighborhood, or the *California Eagle's* campaign to re-direct new migrants "back to the farm" and into the rural areas of California.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, Los Angeles's black war migrants entered into a world with complex and often inconsistent racial policies. Nowhere was this more evident than in their experience with Boilermakers Lodge No. 92, which was in many ways a microcosm of the city's wartime tensions. In the complex racial hierarchy that emerged in wartime shipyards, coworkers and union officials relegated the new southern black migrant to the absolute bottom.





The original 1943 caption of this photo, which appeared in the *Calship Log*, Calship's company magazine, read: "Symbolical of the democracy of the training program is this photograph of a typical welding class. You'll find a former truck driver, a member of the Negro race, a Chinese, an Oklahoma farmer, an Hawaiian, an American Indian, a Filipino and a Hindu, gathered together for a common cause and for their common benefit." Though all of these workers likely experienced some discrimination in the Calship yards, only the black employee was systematically barred from the benefits of craft unionism and forced into an auxiliary union.

*Courtesy of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.*

Regardless of where others placed these migrants in Los Angeles's racial hierarchy, however, they themselves never doubted their right to the fundamental components of American democracy, especially when black and white American soldiers were dying for them in Europe. Black shipyard workers objected unequivocally to the new auxiliary union policy, although, to be sure, not all challenged the prevailing arrangements. As one wartime black shipyard worker interviewed by Keith E. Collins in the 1970s recalled: "My family was more important than a political fight . . . I went in every day and just did my job. I didn't need another fight because . . . I would not have been given a good recommendation when I tried to get another job."<sup>26</sup> But among those who did and did not challenge the Boilermakers there was generally a consensus that the auxiliary system was odious. Particularly galling to black shipyard workers was the so-called "white only" policy of Boilermakers Lodge 92. As one spokesman for black workers put it: "Mexican, Chinese, Italian, German, Filipino, etc. are awarded full membership while American Negroes are denied such privileges." "This policy," he wrote, "is demoralizing and confusing for Negro

workers and also white workers."<sup>27</sup> For black shipyard workers, perhaps the most "confusing" twist to Lodge 92's white-only policy was that it also granted Japanese American workers full membership before they were relocated and interned in 1942. While not bizarre by Boilermakers standards, it was considered bizarre by Los Angeles's standards. Though the city clearly had not been the "promised land" that many African Americans had expected, it was nonetheless a marked improvement over the Jim Crow South. As one black shipyard worker put it: "I really didn't understand the hostility because I thought that we were all American fighting the same enemy." When black Calship workers opened their company magazine, *Calship Log*, to find a photograph celebrating the fact that "you'll find a former truck driver, a member of the Negro race, a Chinese, an Oklahoma farmer, an Hawaiian, an American Indian, a Filipino and a Hindu gathered together for a common cause and for their common benefit," they had to be particularly infuriated to know that of all those people, *only* the "member of the Negro race" was denied full membership in the union.<sup>28</sup>

Thomas Doram's experiences at Calship illus-

trate the disparity between the benefits "white" and black members of the union received. Initially, the union thought Doram, a light-skinned African American, was white, "or at least not a Negro," and he kept his identity a secret. Accordingly, he was initiated into the union along with other white members, given his insurance policy and union book, and advanced from the position of a janitor to a burner in two weeks. Doram recalled that in January of 1943 he sought promotion to the position of instructor of burners so that he could "become ever more efficient in the production of Implements of War for my Country," and he served in that capacity for half the year. When the union foreman discovered that Doram was indeed African American, he threatened to fire him. After Doram pleaded for several days, pointing out his excellent work record and good rapport with coworkers, the foreman agreed to a compromise. "I will let you work," the foreman told Doram, "but I will put you on at nights where other Negroes won't see you and therefore won't get the idea that they all can do the same thing . . . The workers will think that you are Mexican and won't pay it much attention at night."<sup>29</sup> Shortly thereafter, a white leadman discovered that Doram was black and started a fight with him. The leadman threw a punch that missed Doram, who responded with a punch that "didn't miss," as he put it, breaking the other's jaw. The leadman and another white shipfitter attacked Doram with a knife and a hammer, but fortunately the fight was broken up before he was injured. After the dust settled, Doram was fired and expelled from union membership. Doram suspected that the foreman had solicited the leadman's help in having him banished from the Brotherhood.

In addition to the white-only policy, the Boilermakers' farcical grievance procedure for black workers fueled black anger and resentment. Though the Boilermakers were forced to accept the fact that African Americans were now working alongside whites, they did their best to ensure that blacks still "knew their place." FEPC records suggest that black women, by virtue of their race and gender, bore the brunt of Lodge 92's reassertion of their vision of Brotherhood. For example, black women often felt that requests for transfers or improvements in working conditions—"uppity behavior" by Boilermaker standards—led to dismissal. Thelma Pruitt, who, like so many others, migrated to Los Angeles from Houston at the beginning of the war, started working at Calship in the summer of 1943 as a shipfitter's helper. Shipfitting entailed fastening the pre-assembled portions of the ship securely and double-checking blue prints, and was more technical than, for

example, erecting, which was heavier work by nature.<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, Pruitt was assigned to "carry a heavy water hose" all day, which she found both exhausting and unfair. She requested a transfer, and after a month of industrial training, she was hired as a burner, a position that was supposed to pay 25 cents more per hour. When she got her first check, however, there was no pay raise and she went to talk to the union foreman, J. Burnett. Even though Pruitt recalled that her coworkers "never complained about me," Burnett simply fired her.<sup>31</sup> "I feel that I have been discriminated against," Pruitt wrote the FEPC, "only because I am a Negro." Similarly, Helen C. Griggs requested a transfer from her position as an arc welder, "which did not agree with [her] health," to that of a burner, a request that was summarily denied by the union, despite the fact that there were numerous openings for burners. Either she would do what she was assigned, the Boilermakers maintained, or she would not work. For health reasons she had to choose the latter.

Though during the first year of America's involvement in the war, Helen C. Griggs, Thelma Pruitt, Thomas Doram, and other black workers battled the daily indignities of Los Angeles's shipyards independently, they turned decisively toward collective action in the summer of 1943. Before July 1943 the Boilermakers hired African Americans, charged them union fees, and simply ignored them when it came time for union meetings. The experience of Walter Williams, a young, dynamic African American shipyard worker who would soon spearhead the fight against Lodge 92, was familiar to many. Completing a war training course in September 1942, Williams, a twenty-five-year-old husband and father of two, was given a referral to work at the Calship yard. He had to pay a deposit and dues to the union, and he said there was no indication that he would not be a member of Lodge 92. Williams recalled that in January 1943, after he had worked at Calship for four months, "Negro workers started noticing that the word 'auxiliary' was printed on their receipts for dues." The following month, they found that their insurance policies also bore the same phrase and were noticeably smaller than the insurance policies of white co-workers.<sup>32</sup> Williams immediately organized and sought recruits for a new organization, the Shipyard Workers Committee for Equal Participation (SWCEP), composed of black workers who dedicated themselves to achieving a measure of justice for themselves and others in their position and challenging, as they said, "taxation without representation." As one worker succinctly put it: "We pay the same dues, get half the insurance of white work-



ers, don't know where our money goes, and get no union protection."<sup>33</sup>

Collective action, however, even among black workers, would not be easy. The intraracial tension that was apparent in Los Angeles's black community also manifested itself in the shipyards. The first meetings of SWCEP were held in February 1943 at the YMCA at 28th and Paloma and at the People's Independent Church, which had been a progressive and integral part of black Angelinos' quest for equality since 1915.<sup>34</sup> Though the *California Eagle* described the meetings as "red-hot" displays of unity, an ideological rift had already emerged. This rift said as much about tensions within the black community as it did about tactical differences in resolving shipyard equality issues.

Consistent with the "rules" of auxiliary status, white Lodge 92 appointed the leadership for the black auxiliary, designated A-35. Garner V. Grayson, Jr., a highly respected member of the city's pre-war black community, had been appointed secretary, the highest position open to an auxiliary member. A graduate of a California pharmacy school, Grayson owned a drugstore on Central Avenue in Los Angeles, but wanting to help the war effort, he had signed on at Calship.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, U.S. Griggs, a prominent businessman and former employee of the esteemed black insurance company, Golden State Mutual Insurance Company, was appointed assistant secretary.<sup>36</sup> Both Grayson and Griggs were typical, in many ways, of the older black migrant community. Generally from the urban south and southwest, educated, and successful, members of this migrant group often became pillars of the black community, Los Angeles's "talented tenth."<sup>37</sup> This group nourished the steady growth of the NAACP and often subscribed to its legal approach to race issues, as opposed to more direct action—"bulldozing," as the NAACP called it. This was a particularly important issue during the war. Both local and national leaders of the NAACP saw World War II as a golden opportunity to prove, once and for all, African Americans' ability to integrate successfully into "white society" by participating valiantly in the war effort. Thus, they were reluctant to participate in any activities that might cast doubt on the patriotism of blacks.

At the first meeting of SWCEP, Williams recalled that though Grayson was initially interested in protesting Lodge 92's policy, "Mr. Grayson began to change his tactics and tried to sell Negroes on the idea of using the auxiliary." Also, in writing the IBB in an attempt to clarify SWCEP's position, Grayson apologized for the "misunderstanding among the

Negro employees working under the jurisdiction of the Boiler Makers union in the Shipyards of the Los Angeles area." The "policy of this organization," he wrote, "will be to abide by the conditions and contract" of the union until the issue could be addressed in the proper format at an IBB convention: "The Auxiliary Union is not what I or any real American might want, but it is an instrument whereby we can carry on an effective fight for a better understanding between workers involved."<sup>38</sup> Yet, admittedly, Grayson himself did little to "carry on" this fight. After Thelma Pruitt explained her predicament to Grayson, "he said he could not do anything about it." In fact both Pruitt and Helen Griggs charged not only the Boilermakers, but Grayson himself, with discrimination.

For the majority of SWCEP's membership, most of whom were recent migrants, there was no "misunderstanding among the Negro employees," as Grayson had suggested; they wanted action, immediate action. Whether or not the majority's radicalism was a function of their particular experiences as recent southern migrants or of anger born from dashed expectations is hard to determine, but either way, Grayson and Griggs were out of office after the first meeting, though they continued to argue for the benefit of the auxiliary throughout the war. The workers—not the white lodge—chose Williams as their head. By March, Williams had established an SWCEP office at 46th and Central—the heart of black Los Angeles—and had recruited upwards of 1,100 members for SWCEP. He had over 4,000 by October of that year.<sup>39</sup>

In response to the mounting threat of black protest, Lodge 92 sought to portray the auxiliary, A-35, as a "legitimate union" for black shipyard workers. In July 1943, the lodge, intending to ameliorate tensions without actually changing its policy, responded to black protest by opening an official "Negroes Only" office for the auxiliary on 41st and Main. In an attempt to demonstrate the auxiliary's legitimacy, the lodge recruited black organizers from Boilermakers' auxiliaries in the San Francisco Bay area to organize the Los Angeles auxiliary. The editorial staff of the *California Eagle*, headed by the dynamic and outspoken Charlotta Bass, condemned the arrival of these "big shot Negro pussy-footers" and "chocolate hankie-head helpers" spreading their "hankie-head drool."<sup>40</sup> SWCEP was on hand and staged a picket, with signs reading "Jim-Crow Belongs in Germany—Not In America. We Won't Pay Dues For Hitlerism!"<sup>41</sup>

Williams proved remarkably adept at combining several different tactics to combat the union's intran-

Black workers from the Calship yard picket at the grand opening of the Boilermakers' "Negro Only" office at 41st and Main Street in Los Angeles, in protest of the union's attempt to pacify mounting black unrest. *From California Eagle, 8 July 1943.*



sigence. His apparently ad hoc approach to battling the union must be placed in its historical context. As elsewhere, there was little precedent in Los Angeles for black working-class activism, and there was certainly no model, with the possible exception of A. Philip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), an all-black independent union.<sup>42</sup> But the BSCP was neither as powerful nor influential in Los Angeles as it was in the Northeast. In general, the NAACP in Los Angeles valiantly opposed discrimination against blacks, such as restrictive housing covenants, but its efforts were largely confined to litigation. Similarly, the Urban League specialized in finding jobs for blacks, an invaluable contribution, but not one that could serve as a "model" for working-class activism. Thus, Williams was entering largely uncharted terrain.

Among other tools he used was the no-dues approach, through which black workers would continue to work but not pay dues to the Jim Crow union. This strategy proved short-lived; within a week of initiating the "no-dues strike," E.V. Black-

well, financial secretary of Lodge 92, immediately ordered "all Negroes removed" who were not paying dues. In one week, the lodge fired more than 100 black Calship workers and by August approximately 165.<sup>43</sup> In response to this, Williams had begun drafting several telegrams to the Fair Employment Practices Committee in Washington, the War Labor Board, and the War Manpower Commission, encouraging them to examine carefully the "critical condition in the California Ship [Calship], Western Pipe and Steel, and Consolidated Shipyards." By mid-July, Williams had sent numerous telegrams to the FEPC, telegrams that hinted at A. Philip Randolph's influence on Williams and SWCEP. By and large, the establishment of the FEPC itself was President Roosevelt's response to Randolph's threat of a massive march on Washington. Though FDR had evinced some sympathy toward African Americans, most historians recognize that FDR's response was motivated much more by wartime exigencies and a fear of a massive black rally than by a real desire to pour federal money into a fair employment agency. Fol-



lowing a similar strategy, less than a month after race riots rocked Detroit in June 1943, killing thirty-four people, Williams wrote to the FEPC that "the Los Angeles situation is fast approaching a race riot." "The problem must be solved immediately," Williams insisted, "because if the taking of Negroes from jobs continu[es], the riot will halt production" in the Big 3 yards.<sup>44</sup> Williams even portrayed himself as relatively moderate among the SWCEP membership; certain elements of their membership, Williams told the FEPC, counseled "drastic action"—walking off the job—in order to pressure the government to resolve the dispute.<sup>45</sup> Whether or not this was hyperbole made little difference, for Williams's strategy had the desired results; the FEPC established a Los Angeles office several weeks after his telegrams were sent, and it scheduled hearings in Los Angeles for November 1943.<sup>46</sup>

Buying time until the FEPC Los Angeles hearings and fearing that he would lose more membership, Williams called off the no-dues approach and encouraged workers to pay dues, submit written protests to the FEPC, and solicit the support of white Boilermakers members by obtaining their signatures on petitions demanding integration of African Americans into Lodge 92 with full membership privileges.<sup>47</sup> By October 1943, SWCEP had obtained the signatures of more than 700 white Calship workers petitioning to allow blacks into the union with full membership.<sup>48</sup> While this was a small number, probably no more than 5 percent of the non-black workforce, it nonetheless gave the committee what Williams perceived to be a moral edge. If even the white shipyard workers thought the auxiliary system was loathsome, Williams reasoned, the Boilermakers would be exposed as anachronistic racists. Though Los Angeles's black shipyard workers were often negatively affected by the arrival of new southern white migrants, some of whom brought with them racist attitudes, there was a widespread belief among members of SWCEP that white co-workers were not to blame for Boilermakers' policy. In fact, many white workers in the shipyards proved to be sympathetic. Louis Rapellin, a white member of Lodge 92, demonstrated that white shipyard workers could work with, and not solely against, blacks. Rapellin, a thirteen-year member of Lodge 92, argued that "the auxiliary set-up was inimical to the welfare of the trade union movement." In particular, Rapellin resented the fact that the auxiliary system "divide[d] the workers into separate groups," which he felt would be the union's undoing.<sup>49</sup> Thomas Doram fondly recalled that "there were



Calship, like other wartime companies, provided extensive entertainment to maintain morale among its employees. Here, *Calship Log* promotes two segregated yard shows. The top photo depicts the ad for the white show featuring "The Two Blackbirds," a traveling minstrel show. The bottom photo represented the "All Colored Show," featuring African American jazz musicians. From *Calship Log*, 1 April 1943.

many liberal and patriotic White workers on the job who were . . . deeply moved" by his complaints about racial discrimination in the Boilermakers' upgrading policy.<sup>50</sup> Several white Boilermakers agreed to testify to the injustice of the auxiliary arrangement at the upcoming FEPC hearings.

By the time of the FEPC hearings in November 1943, SWCEP had a critical mass of support and significant momentum. In and of themselves, the hearings accomplished nothing in the way of concrete change. They did, however, expose once and for all the intransigence of the union and the Big 3 shipbuilding companies. Thus far, SWCEP held the Boilermakers, as opposed to white workers or the shipbuilding companies, responsible for the auxiliary system. However, the layoffs resulting from the no-dues protest exposed the fact that the Big 3 companies played a complicit role in discriminating against black workers. Upon notification of the termination of their contracts due to "poor union standing" for not paying dues, the black workers were approached by an employee supervisor from Lodge 92, who demanded that they sign voluntary quit slips. The workers initially refused, demanding in return that the companies' personnel departments state that the real reason for termination was that they were involved in a dues issue with A-35. Yet, each of the Big 3 shipbuilding companies refused to supply termination papers stating the cause of termination as being union trouble. The workers who were fired could not work in other defense industries without receiving termination papers, yet accepting the companies' termination papers could make the workers liable to suffer penalties and fines under the War Labor Disputes (Smith-Connally) Act, passed by Congress earlier in the summer of 1943. Their hands were tied. At the FEPC hearings in November, Russell A. Bergemann, Calship's manager of industrial relations, insisted that the blame was not the corporation's; Calship was merely following the Master Agreement contract, which left all hiring and firing to the Boilermakers. More important than the Master Agreement, Bergemann maintained, Calship did not want to lay itself open for violation of the National Labor Relations Act by "interfer[ing] with the internal affairs of the unions." The FEPC flatly rejected Bergemann's argument, maintaining that the ultimate "power to hire and fire remains with the Companies," and instructing the Big 3 companies to stop discriminating against African Americans.<sup>51</sup>

Though the FEPC notified them of the hearings, neither the Boilermakers nor any union representatives appeared at the Los Angeles hearings. Earlier,

Charles J. MacGowan, vice president of the IBB, sent a telegram to the FEPC stating that "there is no foundation for the charge that there has been any discrimination on the part of our local union."<sup>52</sup> But the Boilermakers had much more to say than this. Several weeks after the hearings, MacGowan wrote a letter to Western Pipe and Steel in which he reminded them of the provisions of the Master Agreement and insisted that "the provisions of the agreement be adhered to in the future as they have in the past regardless of any opinion to the contrary by the President's Committee on Fair Employment." MacGowan called the SWCEP grievance "purely an inter-organizational problem which can be settled only at a proper convention." The FEPC directive, he insisted, was an "arrogant attempt to destroy the collective bargaining agreement [and] . . . alienate the good will of Organized Labor and its support of the War Effort." Finally, MacGowan summed up his feelings on the FEPC:

It is further our position that the president's Committee on Fair Employment Practice is wholly without constitutional and legal jurisdiction and power to issue an order having the force of law . . . It is also our position that the President's Executive Order no. 9346 was intended as a directive and not to be construed as having the force of legislation.<sup>53</sup>

For MacGowan, it was the companies' responsibility to ignore the FEPC's directives.

The Boilermakers' brazen disregard for the president's executive order exposed the FEPC's fundamental weakness. It was highly unlikely that Roosevelt would antagonize organized labor and risk a wartime strike among the most powerful force in west-coast shipbuilding. Even outside of shipbuilding, many cases of blatant discrimination were brought before the FEPC that FDR simply ignored. Politically as well, historian Alan Blum has explained, FDR "did not care enough about civil rights to risk losing Southern support for his party."<sup>54</sup> The Boilermakers flouted the FEPC's directives because they knew that they could do so with impunity. Initially, the companies felt more at risk than did the union—after all, they were receiving lucrative war contracts. Yet even they appeared unwilling to comply with the FEPC's directive. Consolidated Steel Shipyard kicked off the new year by allowing Lodge 92 to fire twenty-four black workers who refused to pay union dues.<sup>55</sup> Thus, the actual impact of the FEPC hearings was limited. On the surface, its only function was to "expose racism," whose existence was a foregone conclusion for the members of SWCEP.

Though the FEPC was truly toothless in Los Ange-



les, as it was elsewhere, it served the important function of spurring black activism. The region's black shipyard workers quickly realized that the government was in fact not going to improve their situation. Furthermore, the union was clearly not going to alter its position. In the beginning of January 1944, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers held its convention, at which time it decided to address the issue of the auxiliaries. Of all the proposals presented by the national ranks, by far the least progressive came from none other than Lodge 92. The best solution, union leaders argued, would be to reinsert the word "white" in the "qualifications for membership"; its omission, they argued, had only created confusion.<sup>56</sup> Vice President Charles MacGowan thought better of the suggestion and kept things as they were, with some small adjustments. Realizing that neither the federal government nor the AFL was going to support Los Angeles's black shipyard workers, SWCEP embarked on the most dramatic chapter of its existence. Black shipyard workers attacked the Boilermakers and struck at the heart of their discriminatory policy through direct action and litigation.

"You have fought a terrific battle up to this point," Williams told SWCEP members in January of 1944. "Let us now increase our effort to push through to victory."<sup>57</sup> Williams mobilized the vibrant community organizations in black Los Angeles to raise both awareness and money for SWCEP. Williams pursued several intimately related strategies. First he organized a group of litigants to seek a temporary injunction against Consolidated Steel, Western Pipe and Steel, and especially Calship, to keep them from firing black workers who were "not in good standing" with the union. To head this group, Williams selected Andrew Blakeney, one of the more dynamic members of SWCEP. Blakeney, who had started working as a welder for Calship in 1942, refused to pay his "dues" to A-35 and was summarily fired in July 1943. Though Blakeney said that he would be glad to return to the shipyards whenever the Boilermakers admitted him, he had become a welder not out of necessity, but "to do his bit for defense"; he earned much more as a musician. He was much happier now, he said, earning much more, and living two blocks from the heart of Los Angeles's jazz scene at 42nd and Central Avenue.<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, despite the fact that he was no longer a shipyard worker, he campaigned tirelessly for SWCEP.

In June of 1944, Blakeney and other members went to court with their attorney, Ben Margolis, a member of the progressive National Lawyers Guild and a staunch defender of civil and political liber-

ties.<sup>59</sup> They were granted a temporary injunction against the companies, but only for three months. In August, Superior Court Judge Emmet H. Wilson ended the injunction and reaffirmed the companies' contention that they had no control over union laws. However, SWCEP was not discouraged. To raise moral and financial support for the impending legal fees, Williams sought the support of Reverend Clayton D. Russell, "the fighting pastor" of the People's Independent Church of Christ. This proved a wise strategy. "You may think that because you are not a boilermaker," Russell told his congregation, "that this does not concern you":

But I declare to you that this is but a step that will lead in one direction or the other. If we win, it will mean more freedom for all of us. If we lose, it will mean that the chains will be tightened more firmly around all of us. The entire Negro race must be concerned with this and with everything that injures or helps any of us . . . I'm going to keep after you until we reach our goal.<sup>60</sup>

But Russell could offer more than just passion; he had a devoted congregation of followers who were generous with their money and time when it came to black community issues. In less than a month, SWCEP was able to raise over \$1,000 in donations from SWCEP's membership and the church.<sup>61</sup> When it came time to go to court again, Russell demanded that his congregation go with Blakeney and other SWCEP members: "Fill the room . . . then overflow out into the hall. Show them we are interested!"

Despite the internal divisions among the city's black population and the disparity between the civil rights' strategies of "old" and "new" blacks, Williams was able to effectively rally the support of the church, the NAACP, and the militant workers under his wing. Later in the summer of 1943, Williams appeared at the executive board meeting of the Los Angeles branch of the NAACP asking for their financial and moral support. The NAACP granted SWCEP \$500 for legal fees. This was a significant gesture, for there was no guarantee that the NAACP would participate in such a struggle. NAACP's Los Angeles branch was characterized by—and criticized for—its hesitancy in addressing working-class issues. By 1950, John Lee, editorialist for the *California Eagle*, was lambasting the Los Angeles NAACP for being "out of step with events on almost every occasion" and "more noted for its hesitancy than its militancy." Most notably, Lee suggested, the NAACP needed to address working-class concerns and to "find more allies among progressive labor groups."<sup>62</sup> The fact that SWCEP was now pursuing a legal approach, rather than a more



Despite their vocal opposition to discrimination in wartime shipyards, important African American celebrities boosted morale among black workers by making appearances at the launching of new ships. Top photo: Charlotta Bass, civil-rights activist, owner, and editor of Los Angeles's premier black newspaper, the *California Eagle*, poses at the December 1943 christening of the *James Weldon Johnson*, named after the revered black poet and civil rights activist. Bottom photo: In September 1942, educator Mary McLeod Bethune and singer Marian Anderson stand with Calship workers at the christening of the *Booker T. Washington*. Courtesy Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University.



direct-action protest approach, clearly made the NAACP more receptive to the issue. After the organization had agreed to aid the shipyard workers' efforts, the *California Eagle* alluded to the gap between the old and new black migrants and lauded the NAACP's display of "interest in the struggle being made by the younger generation to become full-fledged American citizens."<sup>63</sup> Far from being "boisterous" or "bulldozing," the editorial noted, the "earnest, straightforward manner in which Mr. Williams presented the workers' cause brought forth a hearty approval from the body."

As SWCEP struggled along, a similar body of workers in the San Francisco Bay area had taken their case to the California Supreme Court. Under the leadership of the dynamic Joseph James, a professional singer-turned-welder for the Marinship Corporation in Sausalito, the Committee Against Segregation and Discrimination had since November 1943 fought to end the Boilermakers' policy. On January 2, 1945, Chief Justice Phil Gibson ruled that an "arbitrarily closed union is incompatible with a closed shop." In *James v. Marinship*, a victory had finally been scored.<sup>64</sup> In Los Angeles, the decision was hailed as a moral victory and "an historic swing from the narrow-minded social thinking of the past era." But SWCEP knew that its fight was far from over; while the *James* decision set an important precedent, it applied only to the Bay Area's Boilermakers. Los Angeles's A-35 was still on its own.

Because of the *James* decision, continued FEPC pressure, and Williams's threat to sue any company that pulled the cards of black shipyard workers for failing to pay dues, the Big 3 Los Angeles shipbuilding companies announced a change in policy. In February 1945, the Big 3 stopped firing black employees for non-payment of dues. This was a major victory for the SWCEP. They still had no union rights, but for the first time, black workers could not be terminated on grounds of "poor union standing."<sup>65</sup> But this was not enough for SWCEP; it was going to see the issue through to its logical conclusion—the Boilermakers' capitulation.

SWCEP met throughout that spring at the People's Independent Church and the Second Baptist Church on 24th and Griffith Avenue to raise money and awareness. Its main task was to keep black shipyard workers from paying, out of habit, their dues to A-35. This was not easy because many of the workers still feared reprisal; rumors had spread throughout the yards that black workers were being fired left and right for non-payment. But when Ben

Margolis went to one mass meeting to collect names of individuals fired so that he could press charges, the reality became clear: not one black worker had been fired for non-payment of dues.

So they had kept their jobs, but they continued to press for union benefits, and in June 1945 the black shipyard workers of Los Angeles finally achieved their goal. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Raymond Thompson issued a permanent injunction against Lodge 92. Handed down in the name of Andrew Blakeney, the injunction affected more than 5,000 black shipyard workers still employed in Los Angeles. He ruled that unless the Boilermakers were willing to forego their closed-shop agreement with Los Angeles's Big 3 companies—something they would never do while locked in competition with the CIO—they would have to give African Americans their full rights. In *Shipyard Workers v. Boilermakers International and Local 92*, Judge Thompson ruled that black shipyard workers must be treated fairly, and not just equally. For example, after SWCEP presented a wealth of data on the particular circumstances of black employment, Thompson ruled that "it is well known . . . that mortality among Negroes is higher than among Whites, and insurance rates are higher. It would therefore seem to be entirely proper that [union] insurance benefits . . . [provided to] plaintiffs and other Negroes should take these factors into account." But Thompson knew that he could not force the white Boilermakers to befriend blacks. Because of this, he gave Lodge 92 the option to form a separate—but—equal lodge for African Americans with "identical rights and privileges, by-law provisions, voting powers and other rights, the same as possessed by Local 92."<sup>66</sup> Not surprisingly, Lodge 92 opted for the right to create a separate—but equal—union. Williams lauded Thompson's decision and viewed SWCEP's victory in Los Angeles in the context of America's victory abroad:

Leaders and members of the Shipyard Workers Organizing Committee for Equal Participation who have led the struggle for equal membership in the regular Boilermakers Local 92, regard Superior Judge Ray Thompson's order as being in conformity with the . . . spirit and purpose of Teheran, Yalta, Dumbarton Oaks, and the San Francisco Conference.<sup>67</sup>


Yet, ironically, the end of the war also threatened SWCEP's heroic gains. Ship production dropped rapidly after the war, and blacks were—true to the saying—"last hired, first fired." In fact, by 1950, there were only 1,680 African American workers in shipbuilding in the entire state of California.<sup>68</sup> Further-



African American workers buying war bonds at Calship shipyards in 1945. While many black workers fought for equal treatment through the Shipyard Workers Committee for Equal Participation, they prided themselves on their patriotism. Among all the strategies employed by SWCEP, a work stoppage was never one of them. *Courtesy Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.*

more, in the age before *Brown v. Board of Education*, "separate but equal" arrangements were seldom, if ever, equal. The "Final Report of the FEPC" in 1946 predicted that the separate local would divide workers along race lines as they competed for positions, much as the white members of Lodge 92 who were supportive of SWCEP had argued. In the final analysis, then, the long-term employment gains made by the SWCEP were minimal. But to argue against SWCEP's impact on these grounds would be to miss its historical significance.

Challenging the conventional periodization of the civil rights' movement, which favors the 1950s and 1960s, historians have recently focused attention on the war years, when African Americans waged important battles on the home front for the civil liberties that other Americans were fighting for abroad.<sup>69</sup> In doing so, these scholars have identified a number of important factors contributing to the black protest and resultant gains of the period. Among these are FDR's executive order creating the Fair Employment Practices Committee, the severe labor shortages in defense production centers, a dramatic rise in NAACP membership and the growing strength of its Legal Defense Fund, and rapid industrial unionization. Despite the undeniable importance of these factors in sparking much of the black protest around the nation, in Los Angeles, it was not the federal government, organized labor, or the "established" national black leadership that

won the victory against Lodge No. 92. This battle was won by the black shipfitters, reamers, drillers, riveters, chippers, burners, and welders of the region's shipyards. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that this was done, not in opposition to the tactical and ideological goals of war mobilization, but in support of them. Though the Boilermakers frequently impugned the patriotism of black shipyard workers who challenged the auxiliary system, the SWCEP proved them wrong. Among the strategies employed by Walter Williams and the SWCEP, a strike was never one of them. On the other hand, the Boilermakers' refusal to compromise the "integrity of the Brotherhood" kept many African Americans out of work at a time when the nation needed them most. "The ultimate objective of the war," one black Calship worker thought, should be "the unification of all peoples to a common ground of workmanship . . . for my Country."<sup>70</sup> 

*See notes beginning on page 299.*

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Grafton Tyler Brown, *The Iron Clad Mine*, ca. 1880, lithograph. Courtesy Evans-Tibbs Collection.

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# In Our Own Image: Black Artists in California, 1880 - 1970

Sample Portfolio of the Works of  
Grafton Tyler Brown ~ Sargent Claude Johnson  
Emmanuel Joseph ~ Samella Lewis  
Ruth Waddy ~ Emory Douglas  
*by Joe Louis Moore*

*Negroes can never have impartial portraits at the hands of white artists. It seems to us next to impossible for white men to take likenesses of black men without most grossly exaggerating their distinctive features and the reason is obvious.*  
—Frederick Douglass, 1849<sup>1</sup>

From California's earliest beginnings, African American artists have been a part of the state's artistic landscape. Working in a variety of artistic media and spanning centuries, black artists in California have taken up the challenge implied in Frederick Douglass's 1849 observation. The images African American artists in California have created of the land and the men and women who inhabited it have influenced public perception of the state and of black people. Moreover, their work has helped challenge the racism and sexism that prohibited African Americans from full participation in the California Dream.

This portfolio is a small sampling of the works of some of California's most influential nineteenth- and twentieth-century black artists. Their commitment to depicting the region in which they lived, their insistence on portraying and defining the African American community, and their enduring examination of the black artist's role in American society have created a body of work that provides realistic, self-affirming, and dignified images of black life. These images, crafted from their own experiences and self-knowledge, have served to refute the dominant population's stereotyped notions of black people.<sup>2</sup>

The six artists featured here were selected because their work resonates with the great attachment to

place that African Americans have felt for California as a land of golden promise. These portraits and images of black people are suffused with a realism that is grounded not only in self-knowledge but also in self-definition. These concepts are evident in the finely detailed lithographs of Grafton Tyler Brown, the graceful sculptures and drawings of Sargent Claude Johnson, photographer Emmanuel Joseph's exuberant community portraits, and the art of the new black aesthetic that emerged in the tradition-based and often searing works of Samella Lewis, Ruth Waddy, and Emory Douglas.

## GRAFTON TYLER BROWN (1841–1918)

Like thousands of other young African Americans of his day, Pennsylvania-born Grafton Tyler Brown saw California as a place of new beginnings, where freedom and gold could be found in abundance. By the late 1850s he left his home in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and moved west to establish himself as one of California's finest lithographers. Living in San Francisco and working for the firm of Kuchel and Dressel as a draftsman and lithographer, Brown became widely known as California's first commercial artist. By 1867 he headed his own business, G. T. Brown and Company, where he created stock certificates and lithographs of California and other western scenes. These works depicted western com-





Sargent Johnson, *Forever Free*, 1933, wood with lacquer on cloth, 36 by 11½ by 9½ in. Courtesy San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, gift of Mrs. E.D. Lederman.

munities and mining towns such as San Francisco, Santa Rosa, and Virginia City, Nevada. His widely circulated works gave many easterners their first views of the region and encouraged westward migration. Brown's non-commercial art, to which he devoted himself after 1872, led him to travel the region, drawing and painting landscapes in California and the Pacific Northwest. These works,

depicting the vast West, embody the spirit of renewal and suggest the frontier's promise of new beginnings. These were themes that resonated deeply in the hearts of millions of Americans, particularly former slaves and other African Americans who had begun to settle in California and the West in increasing numbers by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

SARGENT CLAUDE JOHNSON (1887-1967)

Sargent Claude Johnson was born in Boston and in 1915 moved to San Francisco to study art with Beniamino Bufano and Robert Stackpole at the California School of Fine Arts. Johnson was a prolific and active member of the Bay Area arts community, even serving as the west-coast director of the Works Progress Administration. He experimented with a variety of materials for his sculptures, exploring different media and different scales of sculpture. As a result of this experimentation, Johnson became the first artist to create and publicly display in California massive sculptures depicting African Americans and other ethnic groups. His works portrayed African American people, at work and play, as part of a multi-cultural society. Many of his works can still be seen in and around the Bay Area, including the Redwood Organ Screen (Berkeley School for the Blind), the Mosaic Mural (San Francisco Maritime Museum), the Athletic Frieze (George Washington High School in San Francisco), and his sculpture for the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco.<sup>4</sup>

From the 1920s until the end of his life, Sargent Claude Johnson was in the vanguard of the move-

ment for self-determination and self-identity that first flowered among the artists of the Harlem Renaissance. His work served to link African Americans in California to the social, cultural, and political currents that were transforming black life and attitudes across the nation. Johnson's art was suffused with the spirit and energy of the Harlem Renaissance. At its core was Alain Locke's "New Negro," who was determined to carve out his or her own destiny through the creation of positive, realistic, and self-affirming images of ordinary black people. Johnson proclaimed: "It is the pure American Negro I am concerned with, aiming to show the natural beauty and dignity in that characteristic lip and that characteristic hair, bearing, and manner, and I wish to show that beauty not so much to the white man as to the Negro himself. Unless I can interest my race, I am sunk."<sup>5</sup>

Johnson's work not only captures the physical appearance of the people, but portrays the aspirations and spirit of the community as well. One of the finest examples of his art appears on the back cover of this special issue. Clearly, Johnson was no outsider attempting a quick caricature or exaggeration. His work reflects an intimate knowledge of his subjects,

This Emmanuel Joseph photograph documents the opening of "Minnie Lue's," a Richmond, California, club, ca. 1950. Minnie Lue Nichols, right, and her assistant prepare vegetables. Shirley Ann Wilson Moore Collection.







Emmanuel F. Joseph, *Elks Convention*, ca. 1930, photograph. Joe Louis Moore Collection.

who, as working-class black men and women, were of no real consequence to the larger society, but who under the artist's hand became visible. Johnson's works are aesthetically satisfying, realistic, and inspirational.

#### EMMANUEL F. JOSEPH (1900–1979)

The outbreak of World War II saw a great influx of African Americans to California as wartime shipbuilding and aircraft employment beckoned with promises of high wages and opportunity. Meeting these newcomers and documenting their experiences through the lens of his camera was Emmanuel F. Joseph, one of a handful of black professional photographers in the state and the first in the Bay Area. Born in St. Lucia, West Indies, Joseph moved in 1924 to Oakland, where he remained to chronicle the public and private events in the black community for nearly sixty years. Before the close of the 1920s, he had established himself as a much sought after and prolific photographer.

What was obvious to Frederick Douglass in 1849 was also clear to E. F. Joseph in the 1920s, and therefore he worked to portray the African American

image as a resident and participant rather than an outsider looking in. E.F. Joseph and his camera became a ubiquitous presence at thousands of events in the African American community in the Bay Area and around the state. From the 1920s through the 1950s, it would have been hard to find a black home in the Bay Area that did not display at least one of his photographs. Joseph also worked as a press photographer for several African American and white-owned newspapers, including *The Pittsburgh Courier*, the *California Voice*, *The Oakland Post-Enquirer*, and the *San Francisco Examiner*. He was the chief photographer documenting the activities of black workers in the Kaiser shipyards during World War II. However, it is through his photographs of business openings, fraternal organizations, weddings, funerals, baptisms, and dances that we witness black community-building over a period spanning five decades. Like his East Coast counterpart, James Vanderzee in Harlem, Joseph maintained a successful portrait studio in his home in North Oakland. His portraits of the black working-class and the black elite illustrate the diversity of the community and the dignity to be found at all levels of African American society.<sup>6</sup>



SAMELLA LEWIS, RUTH WADDY, AND EMORY DOUGLAS

The 1960s and 1970s were a time of profound change for the African American community. African American artists in all fields began to call for a fundamental artistic reevaluation and began to demand the right to define the nature of art and their relationship to it. In the forefront of this movement were three black California artists who, armed with boundless faith in humanity and a commitment to social equality, set about changing how African Americans perceived themselves and their environment.

As urban areas from Watts to Newark exploded like Langston Hughes's "raisin in the sun," mainstream media continued to churn out negative black images that, as Frederick Douglass noted one hundred years earlier, "grossly exaggerated and dehumanized" the African American struggle for self-identity. In contrast to such images, Samella Lewis and Ruth Waddy, two of the "founding mothers" of the Black Arts Movement in California, created artistic images of African Americans that incorporated traditional African and African American culture and reflected the philosophy of the Black Power Move-

ment. In 1968 Lewis founded the Museum of African American Art in Los Angeles. Ruth Waddy, a native of Lincoln, Nebraska, and a largely self-taught artist, moved to California in the early 1960s, established California's "seminal black arts organization," ArtWest Associates, and co-authored with Lewis the influential *Black Artists on Art* in 1969. Ruth Waddy's 1969 linoleum print, *The Key*, included in this portfolio, was one of the most important pieces to come out of the Black Arts Movement.

As minister of culture for the Black Panther party during the 1960s and 1970s, Emory Douglas, a former art student at City College of San Francisco, produced artistic images that reflected both the program and the concerns of the Black Panther party. His posters and collages, depicting black people confronting everyday obstacles of racism, poverty, and unreasonable white authority, proposed bold, and often violent solutions, for overcoming these obstacles. Douglas's work was widely distributed in poster form throughout African American communities in California and nationally. His forceful art captured the imagination of millions of African American and other young people around the globe.





Ruth Waddy, *The Key*, 1969, linocut. Ruth Waddy Collection.



Samella Lewis, *Field*, 1969, linocut. Samella Lewis Collection.



Ruth Waddy, *Africa #2*, 1968, linocut. Ruth Waddy Collection.





Emory Douglas, *Paperboy: All Power to the People*, 1970, half-tone collage. Michael Rossman Collection.

His *Paper Boy: All Power to the People* poster, appearing in this essay, is his most well-known piece.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, this brief sampling of the work of black California artists represents African Americans' ongoing struggle for autonomy at all levels. The role and work of these black artists illustrate the close relationship between culture and power in the African American experience in California and throughout the nation.

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See notes beginning on page 300

California native Joe Louis Moore received his master's degree in interdisciplinary arts (1994) from San Francisco State University. A professional photographer with Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory for the past 24 years, and a member of numerous art panels, he established in 1969 Operation Solidarity, a photographic gallery that showcased the works of African Americans and other artists. In 1995 he founded the Northern California Center for African American Arts to celebrate and promote African American artists in California.



# The House That Bop Built

by Carol P. Chamberland

Just as it happened to Jimbo Edwards forty-five years ago, Bop City happened to me. It's virtually taken over my life, right here and now, thirty years after the fabled double doors swung shut early one morning for the last time. For me, it all started in San Francisco in the autumn of 1992, when I was just completing, with co-producer Ray Simpson, *Barbary Coast Bebop*, a jazz video and recording session featuring five local master musicians. Their combined tenure in the San Francisco Bay Area jazz scene topped 200 years—you could say they'd been around for a while. It was these fellows who first hipped me to Bop City, the after-hours jazz club of San Francisco in the fifties. "Everybody that was anybody in the jazz scene went to Jimbo's Bop City," Alan Smith, trumpeter extraordinaire, told me.<sup>1</sup> Cool, I thought. Too bad I missed it.

Around that time, we learned that Jimbo Edwards, the owner of the legendary club, was still around town. Now in his eighties, he was planning to publish a book about his former club. It was rumored that he had a great photograph collection, which I was anxious to see. Invited to his informal gathering of musicians one afternoon in the Tenderloin, I jumped at the chance. It was like meeting a legend in the flesh—very tall, very dark, and handsome as well—a regal cat if ever there was one. Soon thereafter, not really expecting that he would show up, I nevertheless invited him to my studio for a party celebrating the premiere showing of our newly completed jazz video. I was surprised and delighted when he appeared at my door. The friendship was instantaneous, and my life hasn't been the same since.

Soon, Jimbo and I were scheduling rap sessions with various musicians, discussing the photos and memorabilia in his collection, and pulling out the video equipment. That book project turned into a video documentary in no time. A short time into the project, a few local jazz fans organized a "Bop City Reunion" at Club 36, a classy piano bar high atop the Grand Hyatt in downtown San Francisco. I was there with cameras rolling, listening to the hot sounds ring out as surviving graduates of the Bop City school jammed together again. And what a crowd! Packed into the small room, Bop City fans

cheered and whistled when Jimbo Edwards was presented with a commemorative photograph and honored for a job well done. That night I videotaped spot recollections from many of the elated fans, giving me my first real taste of Bop City from the audience's point of view. They loved it, loud and clear! The event was a great success, though many disappointed fans were turned away at the door for lack of space.

Three years into the project now, having amassed a wealth of materials on the subject, it is clear to me that the Bop City story is not a simple tale of an isolated jazz club in San Francisco's Fillmore district. It is a much larger story, one that encompasses mass migrations of peoples, the evolution of communities, class economics, social conflict, and the magical, healing quality of the musical arts. In the process, I've met dozens of musicians and jazz fans who were there. Listen to their story, but Reader, beware. Bebop could happen to you.

It was the late 1940s and the United States was basking in the heady glory of victory after World War II. Wartime necessity had permanently changed the nature of our workforce at home by creating jobs for large segments of the citizenry, such as women and African Americans, who had never before experienced prosperity and financial independence. Populations had migrated from rural areas to locations where the war effort was hottest. One popular destination was the shipyards of San Francisco Bay.<sup>2</sup>

Post-war industry was booming and so were the arts. New York City emerged as a hotbed of activity in the latest styles of American painting, literature, and music—abstract expressionism, Beat poetry, and jazz. Big bands playing swing music held court in the United States and Europe. They offered a big, elegant, highly orchestrated sound, formally conducted by a renowned musician, and frequently punctuated with performances by star soloists or singers. But bebop, the hot new jazz beat emanating from Harlem and 52nd Street, deep in the heart of New York City, was sweeping the nation and the world. Energetic experimentation, immediacy, and improvisation were encouraged in bebop, as raw



An enduring legacy of San Francisco's Bop City was that young musicians, providing their skill was equal to it, were invited to play with renowned artists. Here, some of the best talent shares the bandstand. Left to right are John Handy, Pony Poindexter, John Coltrane, and Frank Fisher. *Jimbo Edwards Collection.*

emotions were expressed musically via eccentric rhythms, fast tempos, dissonant harmonies, and intricate melodies. Megastars Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker introduced the new sound in New York night clubs like Minton's Playhouse and Bop City, where spicy jazz was served up for an eager public. For those in the know, private New York lofts hosted passionate jam sessions that continued for days, where bebop's disciples could experiment to their hearts' content.

San Francisco was very much in tune with the times, and they were good ones for artists and entrepreneurs. The Italian-based North Beach neighborhood contributed mightily to the cultural flowering, with bookstores, clubs, and galleries where the new beat could be read, seen, and heard. The nearby Fillmore district, formerly a Japanese neighborhood, had blossomed into a thriving black community, bustling with restaurants, theaters, and nightclubs. All these establishments and neighborhoods enjoyed a symbiotic relationship, and the action continued around the clock.

Talk-radio personality Ray Taliaferro reflects on the Fillmore district that became home to Jimbo's Bop City and many other fine establishments: "It was a very thriving neighborhood. It was a neighborhood that came out of World War II. Prior to 1940, there were fewer than 5,000 black people in the city of San Francisco out of a population of 700,000. And at the conclusion of World War II in 1945, there were 47,500 black people. That grew in a five-year period of time from 5,000! The Japanese Americans of course were incarcerated during World War II with detention camps, and that left all that property available. And that's when blacks moved into that neighborhood as well. And out of that grew this wonderful culture, this industry, this artistry." Black people had arrived by the thousands to help the war effort by working in the newly erected Kaiser shipyards. Work was strenuous and housing was cramped, but many people had jobs and money to spend. San Franciscans freely supported a round-the-clock network of clubs and restaurants. "And Jimbo, together with many other musicians and fine entrepreneurs, black



entrepreneurs," adds Ray, "were responsible for having developed that era."<sup>3</sup>

Prior to World War II, modern jazz in the swing and bebop forms was thriving down south in the Central Avenue area of Los Angeles, but San Francisco was still largely preoccupied with traditional jazz, often known as Dixieland. During the late 1940s, however, a few brave, new clubs opened up in the Tenderloin and North Beach neighborhoods, offering up the bebop sound to San Franciscans. They took to it voraciously. By the mid-1950s, a plethora of jazz clubs dotted the San Francisco neighborhoods.

Around that time, Jimbo Edwards, originally from Phoenix, was breaking ground as one of San Francisco's first black automobile salesmen, working on Van Ness Avenue for "Horse Trader" Ed Schapiro. It was here that Jimbo met Charles Sullivan, businessman, landlord, entertainment mogul, and prominent figure in the local black community. Sullivan had rented one of his buildings, a Victorian at 1690 Post Street, near the corner of Buchanan Street, to Slim Gaillard for a jazz club and restaurant Slim called Vout City. By all accounts, Gaillard was a handsome, charismatic man of many talents: guitarist, vocalist, chef, linguist, actor, and the list goes on. He even developed his own "hip" language, typified by phrases like "mac vouty o rooty," whence derived the name Vout City. But business skills eluded him, and the club was short-lived. Jazz scholar Herb Wong, who was a devoted fan of Gaillard, recalls that "Slim attracted me and he was a lousy business man, I think. He just had a hard time managing business with music, it seems 'cause his track record shows that. He was, pure and simple, an offbeat musician. Very fine guitarist, actually, even though he injected so much humor in it that he made the guitar almost secondary."<sup>4</sup> The story goes that one day Slim just up and left town, by way of taxicab, headed for a gig in Los Angeles. Arriving at the Los Angeles club just in the nick of time, he made for the bandstand, leaving the unsuspecting club owner to pay the cab fare. Jimbo tells us more:

So now the place [Vout City] is closed, see. But the place absolutely belongs to Charles Sullivan. And Charles Sullivan come down to Horse Trader Ed's and said to me: "now Jimbo, come on out of here and go here and run this joint 'cause Slim Gaillard had it and he left town." So now, I come out and looked at this place and Charles Sullivan gave me this place, said now you got to pay the rent. The rent on the whole building was \$145 a month. And he paid three months' rent, Charles Sullivan did, for me to have the place. Now I opened up this little café thing with Jimbo's Waffle Shop. But there was a big old back room in there. So the musicians didn't have no

place to play their work and whatnot. About eight, ten musicians come and say "Let's take this back room and have us a hangout house." So when I opened it up I said, yeah, OK. Now when we opened it up we didn't even have a bandstand. See, a musician just start to playing here and playing there and when a musician would walk in the door, he'd just start to blowing his horn. And we didn't even have a piano. We didn't have drums. We didn't have nothing, just had a big old building in the back there. I decided to get a piano and really see what was going to happen. Somebody had an old piano in the basement, gave it to me. But it got hot, see, all these musicians would come. So then somebody said "Why don't you build a little bandstand and get a drum set and get a bass and really have jam sessions in here?" So I'm in about three or four months now, so I built me a bandstand. Then I went and got me a drum. Then I went and got me a bass. And so that's how Bop City came. Now it didn't have no name. So we figured since Bop City's closed in New York, we might as well name it Bop City. So that's how it got to be Bop City. But the bottom line, it never was Bop City. It was always Jimbo's Waffle Shop.<sup>5</sup>

The New York jazz club Bop City had closed, only to spawn, at a nearby location, the famed Birdland. In taking up that bebop torch, Jimbo Edwards launched the first of fifteen years of Jimbo's Bop City, the west-coast outpost of that hot, raw, east-coast sound. San Franciscans loved it. Veteran drummer Earl Watkins was playing with the Five Knights of Rhythm at the Say When in those days. He remembers the opening of Jimbo's Bop City in 1950: "It was originally Vout City. And then Slim sort of disappeared and Jimbo came in. So when Jimbo opened it, the first week, I played there. It was just almost a musical fairy tale! Because it opened with a bang and all the guys, from the first night, every night there was a different set of musicians there. And then of course the celebrities started to come in."<sup>6</sup> When the club opened up to the public from 2:00 to 6:00 AM, musicians were admitted free, but everyone else had to pay \$1. Jimbo continues: "So then I got me a neon sign and put it out there and everybody started coming. In the meantime, me and Billy Eckstine was friends. And I got him to come and hang out in my little joint. And after Billy Eckstine made it, then here come Miles [Davis]. Here come Diz [Dizzy Gillespie]. And here come Charlie Parker."<sup>7</sup>

On the outside at 1690 Post Street, loud signs proclaimed that bebop lived here. At the brightly painted entrance were double doors; one led to the minuscule café, the other into Bop City itself. Jimbo sat at the entrance to the back room, collecting one dollar per person, except from musicians. If your attitude wasn't right, you didn't get in, dollar or no. Jimbo ran a tight ship. That's why no one I've spo-



Jimbo Edwards, center, owner of Bop City, greets guests who come from around the world to enjoy the city's jazz scene. *Jimbo Edwards Collection.*

ken with can ever remember any fights or problems in Bop City. Problems were ejected from the inner sanctum, swiftly and permanently.

Without the music, the famous back room was plain: long, narrow, dimly lit, and smoky, with walls exhibiting colorful murals painted by Jimbo's artist friends. Given free reign, the artists repainted the walls again and again over the years. At one time, the walls were covered in strangely amoebic, organic shapes. Another time, a larger-than-life-size Duke Ellington or Louie Armstrong graced the walls. Or a cityscape scratched in white on a solid, dark background. Or dancing girls in fancy dresses. Photographs of the club's interior can almost be dated by those different murals on the walls. A simple riser bandstand occupied one side of the room, and serviceable tables and chairs crowded around. It was not a fancy place, especially by today's standards, but it was a second home to many people. The pay was meager, but many musicians survived lean times with the free meals Jimbo provided them. There were a house bass, piano, and drum set, plus one dubious microphone. Musicians simply had to make themselves heard by their own power. When a particularly famous individual came to Bop City for the first time, Jimbo would commemorate the visit by painting that person's name on the back of the chair he or she had occupied, then replace it in the exact location it had been. Thereafter, if that special person returned, whoever was sitting in that

chair was required to surrender it to him. These select individuals were guaranteed a seat, which was no small privilege.

In those days, Mary Stallings was young, black, and beautiful, a talented beginner, studying the style of Dinah Washington and just breaking into the local jazz scene. "My God, there was so much music," Mary recalls. "In North Beach, in Broadway. We had Sugar Hill. We had The Jazz Workshop. We had El Matador. All in one block. We had The Broadway, Basin Street East. We had so many, in just one square block. It was booming."<sup>8</sup> The Fillmore district had its share of clubs also. With his remarkable recall of details, drummer Earl Watkins reminisces that "You might have four clubs in a block, two on each side of the street. And then you go around a couple more blocks and then you have another couple of clubs. You had the Club Alabam, which was one of our old established jazz clubs. It later became Club Sullivan. Across the street was the New Orleans Swing Club. They had a line of girls in there. The guys had excellent bands. On Fillmore between Sutter and Post, you had Elsie's Breakfast Club. And then later you had Harold Blackshear's Café Society. Then down the block was the club called The Favor. Across the street from that was the Havana Club. And then when you went down the next block, Fillmore between Post and Geary, you had The Long Bar, which had Ella Fitzgerald. Then you went





Bop City was a funky, windowless place, with wild murals enlivening the walls. This interior view captures Jimbo's tradition of painting names of jazz luminaries on chairs to commemorate their visits.

*Jimbo Edwards Collection.*

down another couple of blocks and you had the Blue Mirror. Then across from the Blue Mirror, they had the Ebony Plaza Hotel. In the basement, they had a club. And if you went up Fillmore to Ellis Street, you had the Booker T. Washington Hotel. And on their ground floor, in their lounge, they had entertainment. That's where Slim Gaillard played when he came here."<sup>9</sup> Drummer Art Lewis, a.k.a. Sparky, has recently returned to the San Francisco Bay Area from a stay in France. He also remembers the local jazz scene back then: "There was the Coffee Gallery which was on Grant Street and one right off Columbus on Green was The Cellar. And of course you go on the other side, well the hungry i was down Columbus. And the Dragon Lady which was in Chinatown, was a jazz club. And there was another one called The Rickshaw."<sup>10</sup> And the list continues. The Fillmore, North Beach, the Tenderloin, the Waterfront. San Francisco was jumping to the beat of jazz. And these clubs all drew musicians, both local and traveling, who ultimately ended up at Jimbo's Bop City after their formal gigs.

To a great extent, the success of Jimbo's Bop City was dependent on the continued existence of the local "regular hours" jazz clubs, which brought the jazz giants to San Francisco. Because there were so many clubs in operation, there was always a fine selection of local and traveling talent to be heard; musicians such as Duke Ellington, Gerry Mulligan, Billie Holiday, Art Tatum, Dexter Gordon, Count

Basie, Dinah Washington, Chet Baker, Sarah Vaughan, and John Coltrane all frequented Jimbo's club. Veteran bassist Vernon Alley, who backed up Billy Eckstine in those days, fondly remembers his long stint at the Blackhawk, one of the regular-hours clubs that featured the big names in jazz, located at Turk and Hyde streets: "I was the musical director at the Blackhawk, which was a musical corner of the West. It was one of the most popular places in San Francisco for jazz. And when anybody came to town that played with me or played opposite me, I'd bring them down to Bop City. And when the big bands came to town and played other places, I knew most of them, and I'd take them to Bop City."<sup>11</sup> From the earliest age, saxophonist Vince Wallace wanted nothing more from life than to play jazz. Not surprisingly, he frequented the Blackhawk as a teenager. "It was beautiful because they let minors in," he reminisces. "They had soft drinks. They had a roped-off section where people underage could listen to jazz and have grapefruit juice or whatever. And they had a mirror above the grand piano so you could watch the piano player, watch Oscar Peterson's fingers as you heard him, you know. It was beautiful, man."<sup>12</sup>

Patricia Nacey, a long-time employee of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, was a young transplant from Minnesota back then, studying at San Francisco State College, in love with

the music, the musicians, and the scene, especially Jimbo's Bop City. "This was a place you could go after your gig," she explains, "and hang out with people who would be coming from different places. So instead of just two or three musicians at one place, you'd get six or seven or eight. But Jimbo was smart, and you know why? Because he had a very, very good house band. You don't come in with your trumpet or your ax and just start playing. You've gotta have something to meld and merge with."<sup>13</sup> Earl Watkins was there, and he concurs: "You had a high caliber of musicians who passed through. If their gigs ended here or they were between gigs, Jimbo would recruit them. Next thing you know, they'd be in the house band. They'd stay around for maybe two or three months. And they'd enjoy San Francisco before going back home wherever home was."<sup>14</sup> Singer Mary Stallings was also a frequent attendee. "After the gigs you're high from playing all night so you came here to kind of lay out and to kind of enjoy each other's music and just being around all the cats after the gigs. The visiting musicians used to love to come there just to hang out with the local people and for us it was a great thing because we had a chance to be around the greatest giants of all time. And they just came together as people."<sup>15</sup>

It took a special brand of audience to be out at 4:00 AM on a weekday morning, listening to jazz. Herb

Wong, jazz scholar and producer, remembers going to Bop City as a young man. "I didn't know what to make of it, for sure. But I saw a lot of people I knew and also friends, so I figured this was safe. And I was turned on by the total human aspect of the environment. You know, I didn't stay all night for all of them. It was rather strenuous evenings. It did sap a lot of energy from anyone who went there. 'Cause if it didn't, then you were not into it."<sup>16</sup>

Flip Nunez, that tasty pianist with the irrepressible grin who once led the Bop City house band, commented to me about the late night audiences: "Those days, we used to make a joke about it. But everywhere you'd go, it was all neurotic type people. You know what I mean? Like, I don't know what they did in the daytime, but at night it was all the neurotic-looking people that hung out in jazz clubs. When I first discovered that, I started thinking, well, we need these people out here."<sup>17</sup> All the singers miss Flip now that he's gone. In those days, not many musicians took an interest in singers. Of those few who did, Flip Nunez was the best.

At the Bop City Reunion, local attorney Beverly Axelrod explained how she came to be in the audience back then: "Well, in the fifties I was a very young lawyer. I worked hard and I played hard and I played at Bop City. In those days I could stay up all night and work the next day and that's what I did



When traveling bands came through the Bay Area, they often wound down at Jimbo's Bop City, where they could mingle after hours with other musicians. Here, Duke Ellington and his entourage enjoy a pre-dawn meal at the club. *Jimbo Edwards Collection*



whenever I had the chance."<sup>18</sup> As a young, black saxophone player with a lively horn, startling blue eyes, and loads of style, Jules Broussard landed a job at Bop City on his very first day in town, back in the early sixties. By this time, Bop City had been jamming for more than ten years in the same room. Reflecting on the Bop City audience, Jules comments: "It was people who thought they were hip. And genuine music lovers, you know, people who really knew music. And of course dates, too. It would be the hippest place I would know of back then to go, where you felt good about yourself for going." He adds, chuckling softly, "If you stood outside of the club, you could watch what a person thought of themselves. You know, *this* is how you walk into a jazz club."<sup>19</sup>

Many of today's master musicians credit Jimbo's Bop City as a major influence. The constant traffic of world-class musicians provided an unprecedented opportunity for young musicians to listen and learn their craft. Wailing Bay Area saxophonist Vince Wallace was fourteen when he first went to Bop City. He had been playing Charlie Parker tunes for six years by then, and he was a young jazz fanatic. In an effort to look older so he could make the jazz scene, Vince would rub ashes on his upper lip, simulating a mustache. He now recalls: "It was sort of like a college, being there. Every night there was some new experience to learn. And if you fail one time, you go home and practice and get it right. They had a certain standard they upheld. And the wonderful thing was to see these wonderful stars that you could only dream about or hear on the radio. Or see once in a lifetime in a concert. But this is like every night. You don't know who's going to walk in the door. Could be anybody. Whoever was in town. George Shearing or Miles Davis or Billie Holiday. They all came there." Vince elaborates on the mentors he found in the club: "The greatest musicians were the nicest ones. The ones that were on a mediocre level, they would get jealous and real cliquish. But the real great ones, they could see if you had talent and they would encourage you. And so I got a lot of encouragement from guys like Eric Dolphy, Sonny Stitt. It really made me feel good. It made me feel as if all my efforts weren't in vain."<sup>20</sup> Not only were the masters instructive for the young musicians, they challenged the youngsters to stretch and grow. San Francisco's renowned John Handy was a hard-driving young saxophonist at the time. He recalls that "jam sessions were places where you really had to show what you knew and what you could do and who you were. Everything that you could possibly conceive of playing, normally would come out there or should come out there."<sup>21</sup>

During the early 1950s, even the U.S. involvement in the Korean War played a small role in drawing musicians to San Francisco. The Bay Area was home to, or visited by, many a musician in military attire. As often as he could, John Handy returned to San Francisco from his Army base to the south, to play and listen, before shipping off to Korea. Chet Baker was a young, James Dean-like, handsome, white boy, with a hot trumpet and plenty of energy. Legend has it that while stationed as a soldier at Fort Mason, Chet would go AWOL at night, dash into town to play jazz 'til the wee hours, then sneak back into the barracks before reveille. Both John Handy and Chet Baker survived Korea and went on to successful careers in jazz.

Jam sessions were highly competitive, mostly friendly, arenas where musicians could prove their worth, and sometimes, take a beating. Bay Area drummer Ray Fisher was a young cat on the Fillmore scene. He reminisces, with a gleam in his eye and a grin skirting his lips, about an especially memorable evening at Bop City. Dexter Gordon, the Los Angeles-based star of the tenor saxophone, Ray recalls, was in the house band and wailing on the bandstand when the young, then unknown, Frank Foster showed up in his Army uniform, tenor saxophone in hand. As he often did to keep the evening lively, Jimbo invited Frank to join the session. Audiences loved a battle of the saxes and were in for a fine one this night, though most of them didn't know it yet. While uttering remarks about "soldier boy" and the silver horn, Dexter made room for Frank to join them on the bandstand. Certain of the upper hand in this battle, Dexter kicked off the beat to an old standard, "Strike Up the Band," but Frank challenged him immediately by setting a faster tempo. They played one round together before beginning to alternate solos. Ray recalls, "Going into the solo, Dexter took a deep breath and never got it out because Frank was gone. Frank had played about 5,000 notes before Dexter could take his breath." Adds Ray, with a chuckle: "And I know Dexter was very upset. I don't think he came back the next night."<sup>22</sup> Even the greats, it seems, could learn a thing or two at Bop City. Dexter eventually came back and played his heart out, night after night after glorious night. Many people today may recall the late Dexter Gordon from his starring role in the jazz film *Round Midnight*. Frank Foster survived Korea and went on to a distinguished and lengthy career with the Count Basie band.

Competitive as the jazz sessions were, sometimes you'd get a musician on the bandstand who wasn't up to the standard of the other players. I wondered what would happen in that case, so pianist Flip



Between 2:00 and 6:00 AM, the city was asleep, but inside Bop City, the "joint was jumping." Here, left to right, are musicians Vince Wallace on saxophone, Frank Jackson on piano, "Bear" on bass, and Alfred "Smitty" Smith on drums. Nicknames were so common among musicians and fans that some people were never known by their proper names. *Jimbo Edwards Collection.*

Nunez explained to me: "At that time we had to be part-time bouncer as well. If we didn't like somebody's playing, we'd kick him off the bandstand, physically or whatever, you know."<sup>23</sup> Drummer Earl Watkins is the epitome of gentility, but he agrees with Flip. "If you couldn't play, why, the performers, they wouldn't tolerate you." Earl adds, grinning: "They'd lightly and politely, if you couldn't see where you weren't cutting it, they would gently ease you off the bandstand. You had people who were internationally known up there on the bandstand. So the quality of the music was always very high."<sup>24</sup> The way guitarist Eddy Duran tells it, the musicians weren't always polite when it came to quality control. He recalls playing with Charlie Parker and an unnamed bass player who wasn't cutting it: "There was a point when we started one tune and the cat wasn't making it. So Bird leaned over when he was playing and blew the melody in the guy's ear."<sup>25</sup> Local bassist Ameal Hand puts it succinctly. "Once you laid an egg, you quietly slid on into the back of the club, you know. Didn't nobody have to say 'Hey, what you doin' up on the stage?' I mean there was so much energy in that club you could feel it."<sup>26</sup>

The seasoned musicians were very serious and would suffer no amateurs hampering their music. If the offending player was sincere about mastering his instrument, he would usually go "woodshed," practicing night and day, only to return for another try after he'd improved substantially. Those who weren't serious probably never came back. Bop City was a school, all right—the university of hard knocks. Dick Berk, a.k.a. Sputnik, had first-hand experience with quality control at Bop City as a young drummer. "The first time I was trying to work there, everybody at that time would play fast tempos. Naturally, you'd play tunes like "Cherokee," fast as you can play. And I struggled. And they like, 'Hey, get outta here!' I mean physically take you off the bandstand and put you out the front door. 'Well, we'll see if he'll come back.' I'd go home and practice and practice. When I met Max Roach, he showed me how to play the fast tempos and I got it." Dick returned for another try, asking to play the same tune he'd failed at before. Dick was mighty nervous and recalls that "you would play these tunes [for] an hour and a half. And then they'd go, 'drum solo! OK, yeah!'" His intense practice paid off. "Now we fin-



ished the tune and everybody looked around [at] me and they'd go—'Hey, you're doing it now!' And I said 'How about "The Song is You," faster.' And I kicked it off. That's how I got the Bop City gig. It was great!"<sup>27</sup> Young Dick Berk was hired into Jimbo's house band, the first job of his long and fruitful drumming career. To this day, Dick makes it a point to encourage, but never coddle, up-and-coming young players.

According to pianist Tommy Smith, Jimbo, as owner of the club, also oversaw the quality of the musicians on the stand. Tommy tells me that if musicians didn't play to house standards or they "needed not to be embarrassed," Jimbo would tell them to put up their horn and pick it up on their way out the door. Tommy recalls: "I remember he did that to Chet Baker. Yes, he did. I remember he used to hold back Vince Guaraldi from playing. Certain people didn't fit together, you know, and he did have something to say about that."<sup>28</sup> Both Chet Baker and Vince Guaraldi later became famous for their trumpet and piano, respectively, but not everyone got to play at Jimbo's Bop City exactly when they wanted to.

In America in the 1950s, racial segregation was the rule of the land. Racism was more overt and violent in the Deep South, thanks to organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, but American blacks had a hard time of it, no matter where in the country they lived. Relegated to less desirable housing districts, poorer schools, and less lucrative jobs, African Americans were hard pressed to get by, let alone prosper, in this country. World War II brought new-found prosperity to many a black worker, but conditions were far from equal, even in San Francisco, the city noted for ethnic variety and civic tolerance. And many of the new defense industry jobs disappeared after the end of the war. Blacks were only permitted to live in one of two San Francisco neighborhoods: the wartime housing of Hunter's Point and, as the Japanese were relocated, the Fillmore district.

All across America, musicians had two separate unions, based on racial identity. Bands were all white or all black, but never mixed, until Benny Goodman broke that rule by hiring Lionel Hampton, vibraphonist, into his previously all-white band. In San Francisco, black musicians were not allowed to play in white clubs or stay in hotels east of Van



During its 15 years of existence, hundreds of musicians performed at Jimbo's Bop City. Jamming 'til the wee hours, they created a legendary stream of sound, unparalleled since that era. In this 1950s photograph are, from left, bassist Skippy Warren, alto saxophonist Pony Poindexter, trumpeter Alan Smith, tenor saxophonist Teddy Edwards, and perhaps Stanley Willis on piano. Of these musicians, Smith and Edwards are still living. *Jimbo Edwards Collection.*

Ness Avenue, a main thoroughfare that served as a dividing line. Musicians of other non-white ethnicity, such as Filipino Flip Nunez or Cuban percussionist Armando Peraza, joined the black union.

Bassist Vernon Alley, a San Francisco native, describes from his black perspective "the time in San Francisco when black bands couldn't play east of Van Ness Avenue, and that's true. I was a part of it. I was one of the guys who helped bring it down. Saunders King had a little group and we played down at Sutter and Powell at a place called the South Seas. There were two musicians' unions and the other [white] musicians' union used to fight having us play downtown. Unless it was a place like Zanzibar, Plantation, an African name, the Cotton Club or something like that."<sup>29</sup> Many a black musician struggled to make a living by playing behind curtains for tourists at strip joints, out of sight so the audience could concentrate on the strippers. It was demeaning work, but it was steady.

On some occasions, the white union picketed white musicians who played in black clubs, but no one I interviewed recalled the black union picketing black musicians who played in white clubs. Drummer Dick Berk has some thoughts on that period, from a Jewish perspective: "I, at the time, didn't belong to any union. And I was playing at Bop City." Independent musicians like Dick Berk were usually pressured to join the union. Sammy Simpson, tenor saxophone player and president of the black union, was a good friend of Dick. Sammy asked Dick to join the black union, even though Dick is Jewish. Feeling honored and surprised, Dick responded: "And I said, 'Well, can I?' He says, 'I'm the president of the black union, so you can join it.'"<sup>30</sup> And Berk did, possibly becoming the first white musician to join a black union.

The situation at Jimbo's Bop City was different from the rest of America. Former Bop City patron and long-time supporter of integration Patricia Nacey explains that "what was exciting about Jimbo's was it didn't matter. Your race or your color or your gender, even. If you wanted to go out and listen to music that's where you could go."<sup>31</sup> Saxophonist and early civil rights activist John Handy remembers going to Bop City as an impressionable black teenager from Oakland, where he was transplanted from Texas at an early age. "The music is what really took me. The great playing. I'd never heard adults do this, I'd only read a little bit about it. And then I was in the midst of this stuff. You know, integrated couples, people who looked as if they owned enough to buy San Francisco, and people who looked like they could use a hand out. Every kind of character was there."<sup>32</sup> Considering the dis-

crimination and segregation occurring elsewhere in America, that must have been an eye-opener for newcomers like Handy.

Jimbo and his friends had a penchant for nicknaming people who frequented the club. Though the nicknames were not always welcome, they usually stuck. Saxophonist Jules Broussard became Sacramento Joe. Pianist Flip Nunez was Cousin Ugly. Drummer Dick Berk became Sputnik. Tenor star Teddy Edwards was Little Louie. Frank Foster was Soldier Boy. Art Lewis was Sparky. And no one knows the real name of Frenchy, the woman behind the bar. There was also Bop City Rose, the singing waitress. Wanda Baczek is a gemologist and San Francisco City College instructor these days, but she was known as KC when she worked for Jimbo as a waitress. A pretty, blond, art student, she loved bebop so much, she would have paid Jimbo to let her work there. Coming faithfully to work and listen at 2:00 every morning after her regular hours gig at the Jazz Workshop, she got to know the audience better than the musicians did. Wanda commented recently that "some nights it was very strange and we'd get some tourists that would come in and say 'Sing "Melancholy Baby."'" You know, that was the running joke in the house. There was always some jerk that would say that. One night it would be full of people, another night it'd be very quiet. It was like anything else, you know, it waxed and waned. Jimbo was always sort of a solid rock, throughout. He never changed. He was like an icon, you know. A Buddha sitting back in the back. I learned a lot from that guy."<sup>33</sup>

With compassion, dignity, and diligence, Jimbo maintained a unique climate within his domain. Black discrimination against white players occasionally became an issue on the bandstand, but Jimbo tolerated no racial discrimination whatsoever in his establishment, a rule that he vigorously enforced in those days, and by which he still abides today. At Jimbo's Bop City, the intense music served as a binding agent, uniting the audience and musicians in a shared passion that transcended ethnic considerations. Vocalist Bobbe Norris recalls her days as a young, attractive, white woman at Bop City. "We really had a good scene. People weren't prejudiced, there wasn't any of that going on. It was just like you were either good or you were bad. And that was how people judged you. I never felt the color thing or any of that. I was just accepted as a singer and a young person who was talented. And that was wonderful."<sup>34</sup> Singer Mary Stallings comments on the jazz they were playing at Bop City, from her black perspective: "It's such a spiritual music, it really binds people together. And for that time,



Very few women musicians played with the band, although jazz singers, such as Sarah Vaughan and Billie Holiday, visited Bop City when they were in town. Jimbo hired his staff for its talent, integrity, love of jazz, and appearance. "Bop City Rose," right, was one of the restaurant's singing waitresses.

In the background is musician Larry Lewis, with part of the restaurant's menu visible on the wall. *Jimbo Edwards Collection.*

people that had any kind of prejudice or any kind of hangups, they don't even feel it. They'll sit next to each other, drink out of the same glass and won't feel a thing. I mean, that's from the heart."<sup>35</sup> Patricia Nacey sums it up nicely: "Jimbo's was more than just a place to gather to hear great sounds. It was like a snapshot of your soul or a snapshot of the soul of the community. I think in the early dawn of the civil rights movement, it was 3:00 AM at Jimbo's."<sup>36</sup>

It was even earlier in the dawn of the women's liberation movement—the 1950s jazz scene was a boys' club if ever there was one. Most of the female population at Bop City was in the audience. Some were student/waitresses, some were working girls, and others were aspiring singers. At one time or another, all the top female jazz singers in America made it to Jimbo's Bop City, including Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington, and Sarah Vaughan. But relatively few women instrumentalists were to be seen and heard in the jam sessions. And those scarce few who were there had proven themselves, just like any other newcomer, under fire, on the bandstand. The late Boo Pleasant was a favorite on piano, as was Janie Getz, now moved on from the Bay Area. Los Angeles-based Vi Redd might be on hand with her saxophone, or Dottie Dodgion might be there on drums. I've managed to talk with a number of singers who were on the scene, such as Mary Stallings, Bobbe Norris, Denise Perrier, and Nancy King. However, Oakland-based Memry Midgett, who played piano behind Billie Holiday, is the only female musician who played at Bop City that I've met. It appears that these few hardy players were the sole representatives of womankind in those steaming Bop City sessions.

The 1960s brought a period of great change to America and its west-coast cities, especially San Francisco. The anti-war movement was intensifying along with the Vietnam War, and bloody civil rights' battles were being fought all over our homeland. Hippies arrived in droves, flocking to share in the Haight-Ashbury experience, sporting flowers in their hair. The arts were changing nationwide, and San Francisco was on the cutting edge with its contributions of acid rock, love-ins, and psychedelic art. Rhythm and blues, soul, and folk music made inroads with the young generation of music



lovers. Bebop began taking a back seat, and one by one, the jazz venues around town either changed format or closed. "It'd be nice if you could bring that back," mused Jules Broussard. "That's an American asset, the jam sessions. We thought it would last forever. But times change and there's so many different kinds of music now, you know."<sup>37</sup>

Jimbo Edwards tells how he experienced the end of that era: "The time had ran out. I was there fifteen years from 1950 to 1965 and the time was over. It was all over. The Blackhawk was closed. The Say When was closed. All the clubs was closed and the musicians didn't come to San Francisco. So then I was setting with an empty club and nobody to draw from."<sup>38</sup>

Jimbo's Bop City closed its doors in 1965, just when the Fillmore entered a period of drastic physical change. Over the years, much of the neighborhood had fallen into disrepair, and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency selected it as an area in need of urban renewal. In reparation to the Japanese population that had been displaced during World War II, a new Japantown was built in the Fillmore. This construction resulted in the closing of most businesses that had occupied the old buildings and the dispersal of the families who had dwelt there. Tourists today will find an enormous multiplex theater, apartment complexes, hotels, and numerous

Japanese restaurants dominating the area, with a bank at the spot where Bop City once stood. Buchanan Street has been closed to vehicular traffic, and there is no such address as 1690 Post Street. Even the building is gone.

And so it rested, until one day, deep in the dusty archives of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, I discovered a photograph of the Bop City building, at that time empty, taken at the end of 1969, five years after the club had closed. The photograph documented the sale of the building. With a bit more research, I learned that a few of the better-preserved Victorians had been saved and moved to other locations. The agency's records didn't show specifically which buildings had been saved, nor specifically where they'd been moved. But they did indicate to which blocks these buildings had been relocated.<sup>39</sup> So, photograph in hand, I went exploring those blocks of rescued Victorians. About six or seven houses into my search, there it was! Detail for detail, the house matched the one in the Bop City photograph! In the early 1970s, the building had been moved around the corner from Post onto Fillmore Street. Now painted bright purple with white trim, the add-on in front that formerly housed the waffle shop is gone, and the room that had housed Bop City now contains an African American bookstore. My day of discovery being a holiday, the bookstore was closed. But luck was with me as I met the manager, who lived upstairs. Upon hearing my tale and seeing the photo, she graciously opened the store for me to go inside for a look. In the excitement of the moment, I swear I could hear the beautiful sounds of wailing horns, tinkling ivories, strumming, drumming, and soulful singing. Standing alone in the dark, in this long narrow room, I sensed a thousand kindred spirits and knew I had finally made it to Jimbo's Bop City.

Mary Stallings got to Bop City late in its tenure, so she understands about the spirits. "God, just everyone—Ella, Dinah. Before my time, Billie used to go there. I hear stories. Just everybody. That was *the* place to be. So you had all those feelings. All those spirits that used to come through there and all that good music. It was lovely." She continues, wistfully, "Everybody would just come and hang out. If they weren't going to play, they were there to listen. And learn. You'd get doctors, lawyers, you know, [as well as] just common people, blue collar workers. You'd get everybody. It was just *the* place to be, after hours. Jimbo's Bop City."<sup>40</sup>

Now, with my three and a half years of accumulated knowledge of the Bop City story, I often imagine a second Bop City Reunion, one that would more accurately evoke the original club and scene. For one,



Jimbo Edwards, manager of Bop City, ca. 1990.  
*Courtesy of the author.*

it would have to be in San Francisco's Fillmore district, preferably in an older building with much character and space. Second, it would have to be a true jam session, where master musicians mingle with young Turks, sharing ideas and spreading joy through their profound love of the music, playing because they want to, not because they are hired to do so. There are so many fine graduates of Bop City still in the Bay Area and energetic young musicians gravitating to jazz, the sessions could probably go on for days! Maybe years! Third, it must be accessible to *all* people, not just those with fat bank accounts. All walks of life, all ages, all races, and both genders should be there, united and healing in the celebration of great music, passing the torch of jazz to future generations, Bop City style.

*See notes beginning on page 301.*

*Emigrating west to attend graduate school at San Francisco State University, author Carol Chamberland received her MFA in art and was smitten by the video bug. She has produced several pieces, among them No Place Like Home, The Best of Where Were You, and NOPLSS. Funding for the Bop City project was provided in part by the LEF Foundation and the California Council for the Humanities. In-kind contributions contributed enormously to the project. Ms. Chamberland has been a jazz fan since her first encounter as a New England teenager. it was love at first note.*





Among California's important public gardens, the Filoli Estate, in Woodside, was built in 1915 by William Bowers Bourn (1857–1936), who was seventeen when he inherited the Empire Mine, Grass Valley, from his father. This photograph of the sundial gardens in springtime, south of the mansion, was taken about 1929 by Francis (Graves) Braun, who lived on the estate as a child. Her father, Phillip Graves, served as Filoli superintendent from 1925 to 1929. The Filoli estate and gardens, encompassing nearly a square mile, are part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and are open to the public year-round for tours and special programs. *Courtesy Filoli Estate and Gardens.*

*Edited by James J. Rawls*

*The California Garden and the Landscape Architects Who Shaped it.*

By Jere Stuart French. (Washington, D.C.: Landscape Architectural Foundation, 1993, 256 pp., \$45.00 cloth.)

*The Gardens of California; Four Centuries of Design from Mission to Modern.*

By Nancy Goslee Power, with photographs by Mick Hales. (New York: Clarkson Potter/Publisher, 1995, xii, 196 pp., \$50.00 cloth.)

*California Gardens: Creating a New Eden.*

By David Streatfield. (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994, 371 pp., \$55.00 cloth.)

*Reviewed by the late David Gebhard, professor of architectural history, University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of Robert Stacy-Judd: Maya Architecture and the Creation of a New Style.*

At the present moment, landscape architecture, both in historical studies and in its current practice, is enjoying a remarkable renaissance. With its long and fascinating history, the landscape architecture of California looms large in this worldwide picture. In the past few years a wide array of books, as well as articles, has been written about the history of gardening and about the design of contemporary gardens in California.

In the past, two other moments in time were important for the California garden. These were the decade of the 1920s, primarily marked by the Mediterranean/Spanish garden, and the years after World War II, which experienced the development of the modernist garden. The gardens of the twenties were presented in the writings of Winifred Starr Dobyns (*California Gardens*, 1931) and of Ervanna Bowen Bissell (*Glimpses of Santa Barbara and Montecito Gardens*, 1926). The modernist approach to California garden design was advocated in the gardens, as well as in the writings, of Thomas D. Church, Garrett Eckbo, and others.

It was not until the 1960s and later that the first serious studies of the history of the California garden were written. A classic of these years was Victoria Padilla's *Southern California Gardens* (1961, recently republished). In addition there is A.E. Hanson, *An Arcadian Landscape: The California Gardens of A.E. Hanson* (1985), and monographs on such figures as Kate Sessions and Florence Yoch.

While each of the three recent books discussed in this review presents a history of the California garden, they accomplish this goal in different ways and with varied success. Power's approach is that of a sensitive, knowing guide, who takes the visitor through a series of gardens, ranging from those of the early missions up to a sampling of recent gardens (including several excel-

lent designs of her own). French's volume is in a way a guide, but even more it is a history of California gardens, primarily presented through brief biographies of a number of the state's noted landscape architects. As history, Streatfield has written an impressive, carefully documented study that, one suspects, will long remain a classic on the subject.

All three of the authors are practicing landscape architects, so they bring both their horticultural and design expertise to their respective volumes. Two of the authors, Streatfield and French, are also professors at the University of Washington and Cal Poly at Pomona, respectively. Of these three authors though, only Streatfield reveals a broad historical perspective and has produced an insightful history of the California garden.

As with architecture, the design of the landscape is difficult to convey through text and photographs. For readers to understand a landscape design they must have a plan of the garden, and then a sufficient number of color or black and white photographs to be able to assemble something approaching a complete picture. By including drawings and historic photographs, Streatfield is able to present individual gardens in a manner that does make them understandable to the reader.

Each of these authors employs, as an organizing pattern, a series of case studies of specific gardens. If one has had the opportunity to visit these gardens, then French's and Power's presentation can be appreciated. Otherwise, one can at best come away with an understanding of a few unrelated fragments. But unrelated fragments do not constitute a complete garden, especially as originally designed.

French and Power seem to be at ease when they deal with the twentieth-century garden in California. In contrast, they are uncomfortable with late-nineteenth-century "Victorian" gardens (which one suspects they do not approve of). Their discussions of the mission and early adobe gardens are sensitive, both in text and in illustrations. But the gardens that now encompass these mission complexes and historic adobes seldom have anything to do with what existed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For example, it is misleading to illustrate the mission buildings and gardens of La Purissima Concepcion, which were completely rebuilt in the 1930s à la the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, and to imply that this is what existed in the early nineteenth century. All the missions and early nineteenth century adobes, including their gardens, have undergone changes and continual restoration. Again, it is only Streatfield who provides an accurate historical picture of what these gardens were originally like.

With the exception of the early-nineteenth-century Hispanic garden, the three authors tend to think in terms of the "great" gardens of the state. If a smaller garden is discussed, it is one designed by a professional like themselves. In the process of concentrating on high-art gardens they have ignored the historic

Books sent to *California History* for review that are not reviewed, but pertain to the collection, are catalogued in the California Historical Society library



evolution of California's continually recurring dream of a modest, middle-class dwelling set in its own small suburban garden. One suspects that in the long run these modest gardens have more to do with the mythical, as well as the real, image of the state than do these few major landmarks. CHS

## *John Sutter and a Wider West.*

Edited by Kenneth N. Owens. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1994, x, 138 pp., cloth.)

Reviewed by J.S. Holliday, author of *The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience* (Simon & Schuster, 1996, 9th printing).

"What Sutter accomplished in the eight and a half years between his arrival and the beginning of the gold rush was phenomenal. . . . We can rightly pay tribute to him as one of the great wilderness entrepreneurs." So did Howard R. Lamar, eminent historian of the West, sum up his appraisal in *John Sutter and a Wider West*. As the lead essayist in this collection of five assessments of Sutter's role in California history, Lamar is by far the most respectful, even sympathetic. The others present the Swiss pioneer as an Indian slave trader, a philanderer and cruel husband and father, a fool and an alcoholic binger, and a careless business failure. As the editor suggests in his preface, these essays about Sutter reveal "more clearly the personal imperfections that figured so largely in his career." Indeed they do, so much so that one reviewer (Bill Lindelof of the *Sacramento Bee*) wrote: "This book . . . piles enough mud on Sutter's reputation to build another Sutter's fort."

Many dabs of that mud are to be found in Patricia Limerick's concluding essay: "John Sutter: Prototype for Failure," wherein she recalls that Sutter has often been praised as "the Father of California." To which she gleefully retorts: "If Sutter did not, in literal fact, father California, that failure cannot be blamed on any lack of trying." She cites his Hawaiian mistress, many encounters with Indian women and girls, and suggests that he "seems distinctly modern" as a pioneer of the sexual revolution of the 1960s. She certainly succeeds in drastically changing his image as a noble pioneer, calling the traditional story of his life "a thin, pious parable" that made Sutter "a bore" and recommending that historians and others should end their struggle "to keep him on a pedestal." As always in Ms. Limerick's publications, she gives the reader many smiles and laughs, while projecting new ideas. In this essay she not only rampages through his personal and business life, she effectively analyses how and why Sutter himself, his friends, and later writers managed to present his misfortunes in such a way as to characterize the poor fellow as a victim and a tragic, even Christ-like, figure.

In his study of Sutter "and the Indian Business," Albert Hurtado emphasizes the importance of Sutter's dependence on Indian labor, "a fact often ignored by later writers and histori-

cal commentators." Using a system of debt and credit as well as repression and cruelty, the pioneer hero sought to control and exploit the only labor force available for the development of New Helvetia's agrarian plans. Hurtado says that Sutter used his Indian army "to capture native people . . . and to drive shanghaied workers into the fields." While holding back from a direct comparison of slave-based, pre-war southern plantations to Sutter's operations, the author does assert "certainly there were similarities: slavery, the lash, a trade in Indian persons." In summing up, Hurtado makes a most useful judgment that well-meaning teachers and museum curators have joined Father Serra and John Sutter in the pantheon of California heroes, thereby perpetuating old myths and "overlooking the whipping post and, in Sutter's case, the execution wall."

Iris Engstrand's recounting of Sutter's neglect of his family, his procuring Indian girls for himself and his friends, his pattern of steady drinking and public drunkenness, and his financial incompetence leads her to the conclusion that behind his public persona of mythical hero and hapless victim was "an individual who failed others more than he failed himself."

While focusing on Sutter's impact on the environment of the Sacramento Valley, Richard White sums up both his own theme and that of the others (excepting Lamar) in two cogent sentences. "He was ruthless; but he was even a failure in his ruthlessness, for he was never ruthless enough for gold-rush society. Lurking within Sutter's story of progress is a hint of the price to be paid for it, the price that progress demands. . . . and that was the price paid by the land itself."

These five essays are well written, lively in their images, and valuable as fresh (even politically correct) interpretations of the familiar, weary tale of Sutter, a man too long glorified at the expense of our knowing and appreciating some of his contemporaries, especially Thomas Larkin and John Bidwell. CHS

## *The St. Francis Dam Disaster Revisited.*

Edited by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. Photographic Essay edited by Charles N. Johnson. (Los Angeles and Ventura: Historical Society of Southern California and Ventura County Museum of History and Art, 1995, 182 pp., offered to members of the two historical societies as the Spring and Summer 1995 issues of their journals.) Others may order by sending \$19.30 [includes tax and shipping] to Ventura County Museum of History and Art, 100 E. Main Street, Ventura, CA 93001.

Reviewed by Kendrick A. Clements, professor of history at the University of South Carolina and author of articles on the Hetch Hetchy controversy published in *California History* and *the Pacific Historical Review*.

At about midnight on March 12/13, 1928, the St. Francis Dam suddenly collapsed, sending a wall of water over a hundred feet



The St. Francis Dam ruins, March 20, 1928, shown a few days after the catastrophic disaster.  
*Photograph by Leslie T. White.*

high roaring down the San Francisquito Canyon into the Santa Clara River and then westward toward the Pacific. Built by the Los Angeles Bureau of Water Works and Supply in 1925-26, the 200-foot-high, curved, concrete gravity dam was to provide storage for 38,000 acre-feet of water from the Owens Valley Aqueduct. First filled to its maximum capacity on March 5, the St. Francis Dam was designed by legendary Los Angeles water engineer William Mulholland to provide a large water reserve near the city that would be available in times of drought and that would be south of the San Andreas Fault, which presented a constant threat to the Owens Valley Aqueduct. The catastrophic failure of the dam killed about 450 people and ended Mulholland's long and controversial career.

The standard account of this sad chapter in southern California's water history is Charles F. Outland's *Man-Made Disaster*, first published in 1963 and issued in a revised edition in 1977. All of the essays in this new volume pay tribute to Outland's careful research, fair-minded conclusions, and clear prose, and Abraham Hottman, himself the author of an excellent book on the Owens Valley project, contributes a thoughtful essay that evaluates Outland's career and makes it clear that he provided a model of how to write enduringly valuable local history.

Also valuable is a memoir of William Mulholland by his granddaughter, Catherine Mulholland, which provides an inside view of the impact of the "water wars" of the late 1920s on the family, and gives interesting quotations from various fam-

ily letters on the subject. A photo essay on the aftermath of the flood, assembled by Charles N. Johnson from the collection of the Ventura County Museum of History and Art, supplements those published by Outland in *Man-Made Disaster*. Of these, perhaps the most striking is the handsome sepia-toned photograph of the San Francisquito Canyon looking downstream from just above the ruins of the dam, which adorns the front and back covers of the book.

The major article in the book is by J. David Rogers, a civil and geological engineer who has drawn upon contemporary engineering expertise and computer modeling to reexamine the probable causes and sequence of the dam's collapse. Clearly this is a labor of love, and its diagrams, even more than its many photographs, help readers understand what happened. For engineers this may well be the definitive account of the disaster, with lessons that ought to be studied by dam builders today. Laymen may still prefer Outland's account, however. Its language is less technical, and its conclusions—precise enough for the average reader—are not materially different from Rogers's.

Considering that the St. Francis Dam disaster was one of the greatest civil engineering failures of the twentieth century and second in California history only to the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 in the number of people killed, it is surprising that historians have paid so little attention to it. No doubt that is partly because Outland did such a thorough job, but perhaps this little book will reawaken interest in a largely forgotten tragedy.



## *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769–1936.*

By Lisbeth Haas. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, xv, 279 pp., \$35.00 cloth.)

*Reviewed by Andrew Rolle, research scholar at the Huntington Library and author of California: A History (4th edition, 1987).*

Her publishers describe the author's book as a "Chicano history," a genre born of the 1960s, whose quality has improved greatly in recent times. This volume, which spans the 160 years between Spanish colonization and the early twentieth century, includes ethnographic and anthropological data that historians have seldom employed. The author also provides statistical tables that reflect the abject condition of minority members in a coastal region of southern California. Heavily stressed is the exploitation, or "conquest," of minorities by Anglo-Americans.

The specific locale is San Juan Capistrano, as well as Santa Ana and other parts of today's Orange County.

Some of the examples of cruelty toward both native Americans and Latinos are so moving that one is apt to forget that this is basically partisan history. Any study written from an adversarial point of view has potential disabilities. One of these can be selectivity of sources that confirm an author's particular assertions, either by omitting or lambasting those that do not. This book's multicultural database is, however, immense—including oral histories, court records, census and tax records, even Spanish-language plays. These sources portray a record of *barrio* segregation (village and rural) from the dominant culture at a time when Americanized town-founding replaced the rancho past. Haas gives us a picture of how Caucasian intruders carved modern Santa Ana out of the former Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana.

Such partitioning was not unusual, however, but the norm in California and the Southwest following the American victory over Mexico. This process has already been recorded, perhaps



Mission San Juan Capistrano, above, late nineteenth century, showing the arches and cloister before the buildings were restored. *California Historical Society, Title Insurance and Trust Photo Collection, Department of Special Collections, University of Southern California.*

less sympathetically, in such works as W.W. Robinson's *Ranchos Become Cities*, as well as in Robert Glass Cleland's *The Cattle on a Thousand Hills* and Glenn S. Dumke's *The Boom of the 'Eighties in Southern California*. As Haas's notes indicate, the Indian struggle for survival in California has been studied even more extensively.

This book is less strident (therefore more effective) than some other "Chicano studies" of oppressed underlings whose property losses—indeed their very identity—were threatened after powerful invaders took control of the former Mexican province. As a result, unwanted Latinos and Indians alike were "left out" of the emerging mainstream society.

The author illustrates that compensatory histories can be written with a sense of balance. Haas, however, is vague, perhaps even ethereal, in her definitions of space, time, and power as she explores possible uses of some needlessly complicated (for this particular book) geographical, economic, and social concepts. She is only partly successful in showing how the latter could deepen understanding of a minority's struggle to survive in what became a heartless alien culture. More effective are her specific examples of outright discrimination.

An editorial cavil or two: The author's intrusion of the personal pronoun "I," somehow, undermines credibility. Personalization cannot automatically be equated with objectivity. Although census data are particularly valuable, some of the footnote material is on the edge of miscellaneous. The early historian H.H. Bancroft's first name was not "Herbert" (as on pages 251, 252, and 260), but Hubert. Finally, absent from the book's bibliography is the work of several of California's principal historians who have fair-mindedly assessed the struggle between its racial and social groups. CHS

### *American Labor in the Era of World War II.*

Edited by Sally M. Miller and Daniel A. Cornford. (Westport, Connecticut, and London: Praeger Publishers, 1995, x, 228 pp., \$18.95 paper, \$59.95 cloth.)

### *Working People of California.*

Edited by Daniel Cornford. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1995, x, 503 pp., \$18.00 paper, \$50.00 cloth.)

Reviewed by David F. Selvin, retired labor editor and occasional historian, and author of *A Terrible Anger: The 1934 Waterfront and General Strikes in San Francisco* (Wayne State University Press, 1996).

In the pages of these two collections readers will meet embattled California workers down the years in a wide assortment of cultural, political, and economic settings. They will watch the

development and implementation of new and old tactics in the service of dignity, status, and equity and against prejudice, exploitation, and oppression. And, unless they are close and assiduous students of California labor history, they will see many of these hidden and neglected episodes all too often for the first time.

Cornford's selections sweep from an examination of the native Indians as California's "most important source of labor" between the 1770s and the early 1850s, across the Chinese in rural California, past San Francisco's waitresses and their unions, the integration of the Okies, and black shipyard workers fighting for equality in the union of their trade. The tour winds up with a first-rate study of César Chávez and the farmworkers, the frustration of unionization in Silicon Valley's high-tech factories, and a trip on the roller-coaster career of Fontana, as a blue-collar town. Added to this itinerary are chapters dealing with labor political action in Oakland and the California labor-history standards, the Workingmen's party, and the Great Strikes, maritime and general, of 1934. All of which are aimed, Cornford notes, at redressing "the neglect of women and racial and ethnic minorities in traditional California history textbooks." In this purpose, the book succeeds most valuably—and interestingly too. No synthesis of California labor history can be written or studied from now on without in some fashion integrating these aspects. As they stand now, though, many of these episodes seem isolated from the mainstream of the state's labor movement, as if stranded in a course of their own. Pursuit of still further integration could have provided a more generous context, enhancing and contouring their contribution to the overall history.

The Miller-Cornford collection comes principally from the 1991 conference of the Southwest Labor Studies Association, which focused on "Labor in the Era of World War II." The editors have usefully stretched the era from the mid-1930s until almost the 1960s. The scope, too, stretches to include national issues—the leadership of the CIO, wartime labor law, health insurance—but devotes two-thirds of its space to California, and particularly the San Francisco Bay area experience. They usefully examine wartime labor relations—in the shipyards, in issues involving the machinists and the National War Labor Board, and on the waterfront—but especially the social history of the black migrants from the southeast and their search for a place in the Bay Area culture. And these are the more valuable additions to a broader view of California labor history. It is arguable how far these experiences can be generalized across the national scope of "American labor," but their value to students of California labor history is substantial.

Overall, as one would expect, these contributions vary in quality, style, insight, and the soundness of their data. They sometimes stand alone, buffered only by the editors' comments, apart from those other worlds. But on the whole, they beam strong and long-needed light into shadowy or ignored areas, adding fresh color and substance to the history of California's workers. CHS



## *The Politics of Diversity: Immigration, Resistance, and Change in Monterey Park, California.*

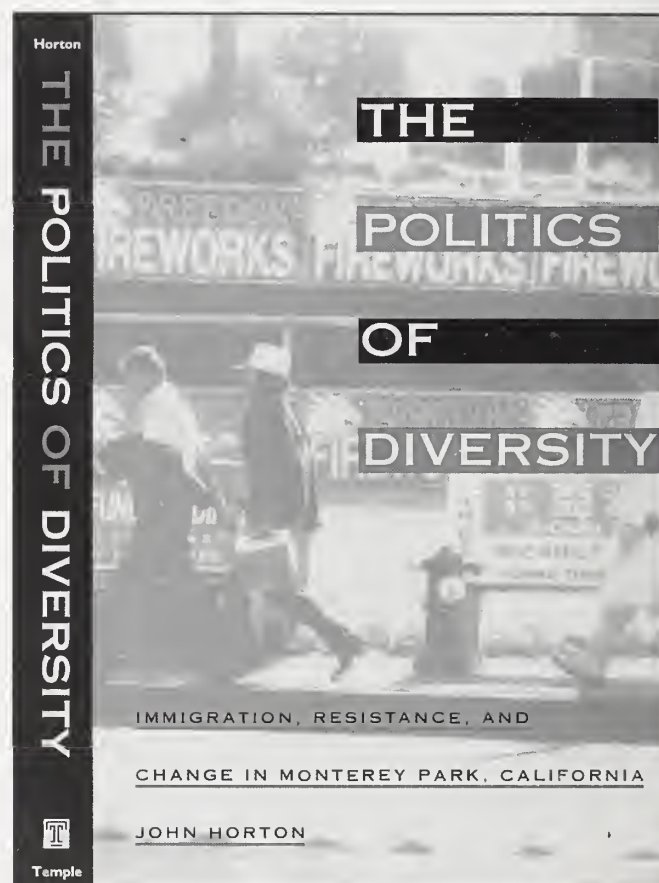
By John Horton. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995, x, 273 pp., \$49.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.)

Reviewed by Martin Schiesl, professor of history at California State University, Los Angeles, and coeditor of 20th Century Los Angeles: Power, Promotion, and Social Conflict.

The past decade has witnessed the publication of several scholarly works that treat group conflict and political mobilization in western urban America. Particularly valuable are Richard Edward DeLeon's incisive examination of development issues and electoral politics in San Francisco in the 1980s and Raphael J. Sonenshein's close analysis of biracial coalition formation in Los Angeles during the long tenure of Mayor Tom Bradley. *The Politics of Diversity* expands on these studies and provides a very insightful account of the complex interrelationship of immigrant incorporation and citizen activism in Monterey Park, California, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Sociologist John Horton, with the help of five talented researchers of different ethnic backgrounds, has made superb use of ethnography, interviews, and exit polls to thoroughly document major changes in the city's social landscape and political system.

Monterey Park in the late 1970s consisted of almost equal numbers of whites, Latinos, and Asian Americans, but the 1980s saw a huge influx of affluent Chinese immigrants and poor Vietnamese migrants. By 1990, Asians accounted for 60 percent of the population while whites declined sharply to some 12 percent of the total. The corridors of formal power, as Horton skillfully shows, opened up to newcomers and brought the election of growth-oriented Chinese, Latino, and Japanese-American candidates to the city council. A group of conservative white nativists, shamelessly drawing upon the deep resentment and hostility of many established residents toward the immigrant population, closely allied themselves with slow-growth advocates, regained control of the council in 1986, and enacted an "Official Language" resolution that severely restricted the use of foreign language on business signs and in official discourse.

Such intolerance aroused much concern among a large number of civic-minded business people and progressive white professionals who strongly supported the local Democratic organization. Horton reveals in impressive detail that they joined forces with various leaders of the Asian and Latino citizenry in an effort to reduce racial polarization and strongly promoted a program of managed development. Many Republican politicians, seeking to build an electoral base in the large non-



Courtesy Temple University Press.

white population, eagerly climbed aboard the multicultural bandwagon. This alliance helped elect an ethnic majority to the council in 1990, ended the political career of the city's leading white reactionary, and drove a stake through the heart of local white nativism. Subsequent disagreements and divisions over affirmative action, bilingual programs, and economic growth unraveled the alliance and led to new coalitions and competing strategies for ethnic empowerment. "A political friend today is often an enemy tomorrow, when a new issue arises," Horton shrewdly concludes. "The art of making alliances depends less on the belief in harmony and unity than on the changing need for interethnic allies" (p. 184).

*The Politics of Diversity* uncovers a great deal about the sober realities underlying the fragility of interethnic coalitions and should serve as a leading model for future investigation of group competition and cooperation in multicultural American communities.

CHS

*The Seven States of California: A Natural and Human History.*

By Philip L. Fradkin. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995, xix, 453 pp., \$30 cloth.)

Reviewed by James J. Parsons, *emeritus professor of geography, University of California, Berkeley.*

Philip Fradkin is an environmental journalist with a strong sense of history and an eye both for the country and the human scene. In his thirty years of nosing around his adopted state, often roughing it alone with his dog in a VW van, he has been continually and critically attentive to the evolving humanized landscape.

He organizes his observations in this, his sixth book, around the seven geographic-cultural provinces into which he divides California: What was originally designed to be a socio-political history has become a thoughtful and many-faceted excursion, a sampling of places and events within each of these regions that effectively captures the personality of the state. Its diverse landscapes, he is convinced, have shaped decisively California's history and destiny.

The myth of a Golden State, a land of quick riches and easy living, is exploding in our faces. Recurrent natural disasters (earthquakes, wildfires, flood, and drought), together with persisting racial and social tensions and conflicts, are prominent in his commentaries. Environmental degradation and the long history of exploitation of minority peoples are recurring themes. The intensity of socio-racial violence and the undirected and rapid change of the built landscape of southern California, where he lived and worked for eleven years as a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*, receives extended treatment in the last and longest chapter.

Although his observations range widely, for each region he chooses one or two emblematic landscape features, historic events, or institutions as leitmotifs—a system of now dry prehistoric desert lakes, the role of Donner Pass as a trans-Sierra passageway, the Modoc Indian Wars, the Japanese internment camp at Tule Lake, the long battle to keep open the entrance to Humboldt Bay, seismicity and the San Andreas fault, the farm community of Turlock (where he also worked) and its irrigation district, the channelization of the Los Angeles River, the pervasive influence of the *Times* in the development of southern California. For the author, the state's history “unreels in a sequence of filmic scenes, the camera zooming in for a close-up of an individual, a human construct, or a detail of Nature and then retreating to a wide-angle shot that establishes context.”

The impressions of William H. Brewer, who participated in the first geological survey of the state 130 years ago, provide a

kind of baseline for the narrative. Numerous appropriate quotations from his *Up and Down California*, as well as from a host of other distinguished past interpreters of California, enrich the text and provide perspective. Through it all, the author's hands-on field experience and observations shine through.

Thirty dense pages of ‘Source Notes,’ including countless newspaper references, confirm the author's command of the diverse and growing literature. But it is not a work to be studied so much as one to be read for pleasure. It elucidates with an easy grace the personality of a very special place and must be rated a major addition to the growing California bookshelf. And it does grow, and grow!





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# CHECKLIST

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## NOTES

Moore, "African Americans in California," pp. 194-197.

1. United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, "Statistics for California Supplement,"* 582-614; Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 8-10, 17-19, 25-27, 66-70, 91-92; "Getting There, Being There: African American Migration to Richmond, California, 1910-1945," in Joe William Trotter, Jr., ed., *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class and Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 106-107; Kenneth G. Goode, *California's Black Pioneers: A Brief Historical Survey* (Santa Barbara: McNally and Loftin Publishers, 1974), 3-20, 65, 87-88, 90-91; William Loren Katz, *The Black West*, 3rd ed. (Seattle: Open Hand Publishing, Inc., 1987), 118-19, 129-30, 138-39; Rudolph Lapp, *African Americans in California* (San Francisco: Boyd and Fraser Publishing Company, 1979), 1-17.
2. Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (Los Angeles: n.p., 1919, reprinted R and R Research Associates, San Francisco, 1968), 94, 248; Lorraine Jacobs Crouchett, *Delilah Leontium Beasley: Oakland's Crusading Journalist* (El Cerrito, California: Downey Place Publishing House, Inc., 1990), viii, 3-6, 23, 41-54.
3. For the invisibility of African Americans in early histories of California see Albert J. Denis, *Spanish Alta California* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1927), Joseph C. Whitnah, *A History of Richmond, California: The City That Grew from a Rancho* (Richmond: n.p., 1944). For early journal articles and academic papers on African Americans, see especially W. Sherman Savage, "The Negro in the Westward Movement," *Journal of Negro History* XXV (1940): 533-34; Ernest V. Siracusa, "Black 49ers: The Negro in the California Gold Rush, 1848-1960" (unpublished research paper, n.d., Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley). For the new scholarship, see Goode, *California's Black Pioneers*; Rudolph M. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Robert I. Heizer and Alan J. Almquist, *The Other Californians: Prejudice and Discrimination under Spain, Mexico and the United States to 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Lapp, *African Americans in California*.
4. Eleanor Mason Ramsey, "Allensworth: A

Study in Social Change" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1977); Keith Collins, *Black Los Angeles: The Maturing of the Ghetto, 1940-1950* (Los Angeles: Century Twenty-One Publishing, 1976); Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, "To Place Our Deeds: The African American Community in Richmond, California, 1910-1963" (unpublished book manuscript, 1989); Douglas Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Albert Broussard, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993).

Caesar, "Historical Demographics," pp. 198-213.

1. Jack Forbes, *Afro-Americans in the Far West: A Handbook for Educators* (Sacramento: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1991), as cited in John Templeton, *Our Roots Run Deep: The Black Experience in California* (San Jose: Aspire Books, 1991), 77-78. See also Kenneth B. Goode, *California's Black Pioneers: A Brief Historical Survey* (Santa Barbara, 1976), 11.
2. William Sherman Savage, "The Influence of William Alexander Leidesdorff on the History of California," *Journal of Negro History* 38 (1953): 322-32. See also "Sutter Puts Leidesdorff into Possession of Rancho Rio de Los Americanos," deposition by John Sutter in 1858, in *Natoma Water and Mining Co. v. John Clarkin, et al.* (#3844, 2nd Series, District Court, Sacramento County, MS, California State Archives). Also helpful is *Golden Notes* 14 (Sacramento: Sacramento Historical Society, November, 1967): 4-5.
3. Rudolph Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 13. This is the most comprehensive study to date of the historical role of African Americans in California during the gold-rush period. This work provides names, dates, and sources on early black involvement in areas as varied as Sacramento, San Francisco, Stockton, Grass Valley, Marysville, Oakland, and the Mother Lode areas of the Sierra Nevada.
4. *1852 State Census in the Seventh Census of the United States, 1850* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer, 1853), 982. Population statistics for the slave population in Sacramento County were not given in this or any census. All pre-Civil War census fig-

ures cited in this study refer only to free blacks.

5. Wintfield J. Davis, *An Illustrated History of Sacramento County, California* (Chicago, 1890), 208.
6. Despite the discrepancies between the 1850 and 1852 censuses in the numbers of black residents and their occupations, figures cited can be considered accurate within a margin of plus or minus ten persons. Rudolph Lapp, in *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, acknowledges that the 1852 census figures cited in his chapter on Gold Rush cities are only "roughly accurate." Lapp also notes on page 110 that Sacramento had two black doctors, one of whom is identified on page 241 as C.A. Rogers. An examination of the *Pacific Appeal*, an early black-owned and operated newspaper published in San Francisco, reveals advertising for a Dr. W.H.C. Stephenson of Sacramento. Further research on these men and their particular practices is forthcoming.
7. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 109.
8. Samuel Colville, *Directory of Sacramento for 1854-55* (Sacramento, 1855).
9. Adam Eterovich, ed. *Proceedings of the First State Convention of Colored Citizens of the State of California, 1855 . . .* (San Francisco, R&E Research Associates, reprint 1969), 18. See also Phillip S. Foner and George E. Walker, *Proceedings of the Black State Conventions, 1840-1865*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1977). Both these works give complete transcripts of the proceedings for the 1855, 1856, and 1865 conventions.
10. Thomas H. Thompson and Albert Augustus West, *History of Sacramento County, California, 1880* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1960), 105. See also Lucy B. Robinson, *A Brief History of St. Andrew's Church* (Sacramento: n.d.), 1-3; Raymond M. Momboisse and Cyrus S. Keller, "Our Pioneer Churches," *Golden Notes* (Sacramento: Sacramento Historical Society, 1964), 2.
11. Thompson and West, *History of Sacramento County*, 107. See also Dorothy Covington, "Shiloh Baptist Church History," in *Shiloh Baptist Church: We've Come This Far By Faith 124 Years of Continuous Christian Service* (Sacramento, 1980), 14. See also Julie E. Mims and Kevin M. Mims, *Sacramento: A Pictorial History of California's Capital* (Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Co. 1981), 34.
12. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 163.
13. Walter G. Reed, *History of Sacramento County, California* (Los Angeles, 1923), 202. See also "The Historical Origins of Masonry . . .



- Jose Forum* (January 1908), p. 1. This black-owned newspaper was originally published under the banner of the *Sacramento Forum* in April 1906 by Rev. J. Gordon McPherson, then a pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church. Only one issue of the *Sacramento Forum* was ever published. Rev. McPherson left Sacramento for San Jose in 1906, where he continued publication of the paper under the banner of the *San Jose Forum*. Rare copies of these papers can be found in the collections of the California State Library in Sacramento.
  14. Delilah Beasley, *Negro Trailblazers of California* (Los Angeles: Times Mirror Printing and Binding House, 1919), 172; Robinson, *St. Andrew's Church*, 1-3; Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 176-77; *Pacific Appeal*, April 26, 1862, 3.
  15. Beasley, *Trailblazers*, 61; *Pacific Appeal*, March 21, 1863; Walton Bean and James Rawls, *California: An Interpretive History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 143; see also R.F. Heizer and A.F. Almquist, *The Other Californians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).
  16. *Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864) 24-25.
  17. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 51-52; see also Edwin G. Gude, *California Place Names*, 3rd rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 219.
  18. *Population of the United States in 1860*, 24.
  19. Clarence Caesar, "An Historical Overview of Sacramento's Black Community, 1850-1980" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 1985), 31-91; see also James A. Fisher, "The Political Development of the Black Community in California, 1850-1950" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York, Stony Brook, 1971). See also, *Population of the United States in 1870* (Washington: GPO, 1872), 91.
  20. William L. Willis, *History of Sacramento County, California* (Los Angeles: 1919), 255.
  21. Eterovich, *Proceedings*, 85.
  22. *Statistics of the Population of the United States, 1880* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883).
  23. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 259; see also Marysville *Appeal*, April 14, 1888; Peter J. Delay, *History of Yuba and Sutter Counties* (1924); Eleanor M. Ramsey and Janice S. Lewis, "A History of Black Americans in California," *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California* (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation, 1988), 91.
  24. Mary Praetzellis and Adrian Praetzellis, "We Were Here Too": Archaeology of an African-American Family in Sacramento, California (Rohnert Park: Anthropological Studies Center, Sonoma State University, 1992), 116-17; Caesar, "Historical Overview," 91-138.
  25. *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Population, Part I* (Washington: U.S. Printing Office, 1901), 702-737.
  26. For additional insights into the effects of the concerted efforts of the all-white unions to drive blacks from targeted trades and occupations in northern California, see Douglas Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 32-43. See also *Portland New Age*, December 6, 1902, 4:1.
  27. *Population of the United States in 1890* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895), xciii.
  28. John D. Weaver, *Los Angeles: The Enormous Village, 1781-1981* (Santa Barbara, 1982), 118. See also Rudolf Lapp, *Afro-Americans in California* (San Francisco: Boyd and Fraser Publishing Co., 1979), 25-28.
- Bragg, "Sacramento Blacks and the Public Schools," pp. 214-221.**
1. Peter Cole, *Cole's War with Ignorance and Deceit and His Lecture on Education* (San Francisco: J.H. Udell and R.P. Locke, 1857), 41.
  2. David Tyack, Thomas James, and Aaron Benavot, *Law and the Shaping of Public Education, 1785-1954* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 87-91. See ch. 3, "Law and State School Policy: Case Studies of Michigan and California, 1835-1900," 77-107, passim, for an excellent comparison of the development of state public school systems in the nineteenth century. Another useful source for early school legislation is John Swett, *History of the Public School System in California* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1876), 14-20. Swett was California superintendent of public instruction from 1863 to 1868.
  3. Irving G. Hendrick, *The Education of Non-Whites in California, 1849-1970* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, Inc., 1977), 7.
  4. Daniel J. Thomas, ed., "An Act to Extend and to Better Define the Powers and Duties of the City Council of the City of Sacramento and to Authorize the Establishment of Free Schools in Said City, passed April 26, 1853," in *The Charter and Ordinances of the City of Sacramento* (Sacramento: Water Fount and Home Journal, Print., 1856), 30-31.
  5. See *Sacramento Daily Union*, January 6, 1854: 2, January 2, 1854: 2, and May 27, 1854: 2, for typical complaints about the inefficiency of Sacramento county school board officials. See also Winfield J. Davis, *History and Progress of the Public Schools Department of the City of Sacramento, 1849-1893* (Sacramento: D. Johnston and Co., Printers, 1895), 26-37, for a detailed account of the controversy between city and county officials.
  6. Davis, *History and Progress*, 39.
  7. Hendrick, *The Education of Non-Whites*, 7.
  8. *Sacramento Daily Union*, January 30, 1855: 3. The black teacher was probably Reverend J.J. Moore, who taught a "colored school" in San Francisco, the site of the convention. See Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (Los Angeles: Privately Printed, 1919; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 177, regarding Moore.
  9. *Sacramento Daily Union*, March 27, 1855: 2. In this published letter to the Grass Valley school superintendent, Hubbs insisted that any education of minority children must take place in separate schools, writing that the school laws "[do] not contemplate a system of 'black and white society' of children in social study."
  10. Hendrick, *The Education of Non-Whites*, 7 (emphasis added).
  11. Andrew Jackson Moulder, *Annual Report of the State Superintendent, 1858, in Appendix to Senate Journal*, 9th Session, 1858.
  12. See Frederick M. Binder, *The Age of the Common School, 1830-1865* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1974), 145-46; and Meyer Weinberg, *A Chance to Learn: A History of Race and Education in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 11-20, on education in the antebellum South. *Journal of Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of the Ministers and Lay Delegates of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (San Francisco: B.F. Sterett, Printer, 1863), 9. Frederick Douglass describes how, as a slave, he taught himself to read in the 1830s with the help of unsuspecting white children. See his autobiographical writings, collected in *Frederick Douglass: Autobiographies*, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., ed. (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1994).
  13. Weinberg, *A Chance to Learn*, 20-37.
  14. In 1860, even after the 1858 gold discovery at Fraser River, British Columbia, drew many blacks northward, Sacramento was reported to have 468 black residents. See *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington, D.C.: Robert Armstrong, Printer, 1853), 966-69; and *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1864), 28. Also, see black reports of county statistics in *Proceedings of the First State Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of California* (Sacramento: Democratic State Journal Print., 1855; reprint, San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1969), 18. Regarding the Sacramento black community and the Fraser River gold rush, see Clarence Caesar, "An Historical Overview of the Development of Sacramento's Black Community, 1850-1983" (Master's thesis, CSU, Sacramento, 1985), 73-74.
  15. Samuel Colville, ed., *Samuel Colville's City Directory of Sacramento* (San Francisco: Monson and Valentine, Book and Job Printers, 1854), 79. See also Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 174, and Caesar, "An Historical Overview of the Development of Sacramento's Black Community, 1850-1983," 55. Beasley, 177, reports that Elizabeth Thorn Scott-Flood also opened a school for black children in Oakland after she moved there with her husband around 1857.
  16. Samuel Colville, ed., *Colville's Sacramento Directory* (Sacramento: James Anthony & Co., Book and Job Printers, 1855), 72.
  17. Davis, *The History and Progress*, 25-26. Beasley in *The Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 174, substantiates this information. Although Beasley describes black efforts to provide a schoolhouse for Scott's school, she also reports that in 1855 the Sacramento city school board built a school for blacks, a fact not substantiated in the school records, which meticulously noted the development of other public schools. Not until 1866 was a structure built for the use of the public colored school, despite the fact that Davis, in *History and Progress*, 64, 67, and 68-69, notes



- that blacks promised to donate a lot to the school board in 1865.
18. Beasley, *The Negro Trailblazers of California*, 163, 168-69. See also William Wells Brown, "Jeremiah Burke Sanderson," in *The Black Man, His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements* (New York: Thomas Hamilton, 1863; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1969), 91-92, and Rudolph M. Lapp, "Jeremiah B. Sanderson: Early California Negro Leader," in *Journal of Negro History* 52 (October 1968): 321-25, on Sanderson's life up to 1855. It is important to note that while Delilah Beasley was one of the first historians to chronicle the black settlers of California, much of the information she collected is marred by slight mistakes and the lack of source citation. The problems may be due to the nature of Beasley's sources. Beasley gathered much of her information by interviewing descendants of early black settlers. Many of the errors noted in her work may simply be due to fading or blurred memories, a difficulty common with oral histories. Beasley's work is still useful as a guide, especially when corroborated by other sources.
  19. Minutes, Sacramento City School Board, June 19, 1855, Sacramento Archives Museum and Collection Center.
  20. *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 7, 1855: 1.
  21. Minutes, Sacramento City School Board, June 19 and 23 and August 18, 1855.
  22. *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 25, 1855: 2.
  23. *Ibid.*, October 24, 1855: 2.
  24. Jeremiah B. Sanderson Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. The Emancipation Proclamation speech is a draft written some time in 1875. See also the address of J.J. Moore and T.M.D. Ward, regarding education, in the published proceedings of the 1855 State Convention of Colored Citizens of California, 27.
  25. David Iyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 110.
  26. *Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of Colored Citizens*, 41. See also *Proceedings of the First State Convention of Colored Citizens*, 25, for Rev. J.J. Moore and T.M.D. Ward's speech urging blacks to educate their children and rebuking the state for excluding black children from public schools.
  27. *Sacramento City Charter*, Ordinance 47.
  28. Sacramento City Council Records, October 23, 1855, Vol. J, Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center.
  29. *Ibid.* See the *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 9, 1855: 2, for a copy of English's veto message.
  30. *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 10, 1855, regarding the protest. "Kanakas" was the term then used for natives of the Hawaiian Islands. "Diggers" was the pejorative label for California native peoples.
  31. Sacramento City Council Records, October 22, 1855, Vol. J. See the *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 23, 1855: 2. Although D.S. Woodward signed Hayden and Hardy's protest, he is not noted present at either of the meetings where a vote was taken on the issue.
  32. *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 24, 1855: 2.
  33. Sanderson communication to *The Liberator*, cited in Rudolph Lapp, *Black in Gold Rush California* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 177.
  34. *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 23, 1855: 2, and February 23, 1856: 2.
  35. *Ibid.*, October 26 and 30, 1855: 2. Although the *Union* noted the election of new city council members to replace Hardy and Woodward, there was no mention of the candidates' views on the issue of the colored school. See November 6, 10, and 12, 1855: 2. The *Union* also reported on November 6, 1855: 2, that the general public was invited to a meeting of "the Lyceum" to debate the question "should colored children be educated at the expense of the Public School Fund of the city?" The results of this debate were never reported.
  36. *Ibid.*, November 2, 1857: 2.
  37. Minutes, Sacramento City School Board, September 29 and October 13, 1855, and April 1 and May 18, 1856.
  38. Sanderson's job opportunity in El Dorado County remains unknown, but he participated in the 1856 Colored Citizens Convention as a delegate from that county. See Lapp, "Jeremiah B. Sanderson: Early California Negro Leader," 326-27.
  39. Minutes, Sacramento City School Board, June 9 and 27, 1857, and May 23, 1858.
  40. *Sacramento Daily Union*, April 3, 1858: 2, April 8, 1858: 3, October 1, 1859: 3, and October 6, 1859: 3. On April 17, 1856: 2, the *Union* reported that "Daniel Blew is soliciting subscriptions in aid of the school for colored children." "Blew" was probably Daniel Blue, one of the pioneer black residents of Sacramento.
  41. Sacramento County Land Sale Records and Indexes, Sacramento County Recorder's Office, Deeds Book W, 243-244, 331. The transfer of the lot is mis-identified in the index to the deed books, with the grantee, or buyer, listed as "Sacramento City Schools." The lot is identified in the Sacramento County Tax Assessment Roll and Map Book of 1860, by the penciled-in notation, "colored school, nigger go in."
  42. *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 6, 1859: 3. The black community of Sacramento supported other causes as well. The *Union* noted on November 1, 1859: 3, that "a colored woman, named Mrs. Tompkins, who recently purchased her freedom from servitude in Missouri, will hold a levee this evening at Concert Hall, on K Street, for the purpose of enabling her to purchase her child, which is still in Missouri."
  43. Between 1856 and 1859, the colored school requested funds to hire at least three different teachers, and the school was closed for several months in 1857 after "the bill presented to the Board by the colored teacher," was refused. Minutes, Sacramento City School Board, June 27 and October 31, 1857. This black teacher was never named, but school board minutes list Mr. Handry, Miss McIntyre, and Mrs. Davis as candidates for the position during this period. See Minutes, December 15, 1856, and May 20, September 4, and November 5, 1858.
  44. *Ibid.*, May 9 and October 1, 1859. At the October 31 meeting, the public school salary schedule was officially set, with the highest salary of \$100 paid to the high school principal. Grammar school teachers were to be paid between \$100 and \$120 dollars, depending on the gender of the employee. Primary school teachers were employed at a salary of \$75 dollars per month.
  45. *Ibid.*, April 30, 1860.
  46. *Sacramento Daily Union*, April 23, 1860: 1. The paper also reported that the school was largely attended by girls, probably due to the need for boys to go to work at an early age.
  47. *Ibid.*, December 17, 1860: 5.
  48. Minutes, Sacramento City School Board, December 3, 1860.
  49. Minutes, Sacramento City School Board, May 28, June 25, and December 3, 1860.
  50. *Seventh Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to the Legislature of the State of California, 1858* in *California Legislature, Appendix to the Journal of the Senate of the State of California, 9th Session, 1858* (Sacramento: State Printer, 1858), 14-15. See also Hendrick, *The Education of Non-Whites*, 7-9. *Statutes of California, 1860* (Sacramento: Charles T. Botts, State Printer, 1860), 321, 325.
  51. Cole, *Cole's War with Ignorance and Deceit*, 10.

#### Moss, "Development of the African American Community," pp. 222-235.

1. James M. Brodie, "Rounding Up the Truth: Black Scholars Push for 'Real History' of Old West," *Black Issues in Higher Education* 9 (March 1992): 18.
2. Herbert E. Bolton, "The Mission as a Frontier Institution in the Spanish-American Colonies," in *Essays on the History of the American West*, ed. Stephen Salsbury (Hinsdale: The Dryden Press, 1975), 44. See also Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain: The Beginning of Spanish Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).
3. A. Odell Thurman, "The Negro in California Before 1890," *The Pacific Historian* 19 (Winter 1975): 325.
4. Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran, "La Poblacion Negra de Mexico," *Estudio etnohistorico*, 2 ed. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1974). See also Beltran, "The Slave Trade in Mexico," *The Hispanic American Research Review* 24 (August 1944): 412-32. Rudolph M. Lapp, in *Blacks in Gold Rush California* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), makes reference to four Negroes in the Sir Francis Drake expedition in 1579. Ivan Van Serima, in *They Came Before Columbus: The African Presence in Ancient America* (New York: Random House, 1976), and Jack D. Forbes, in *Black Africans and Native Americans: Color, Race & Caste in the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples* (Great Britain: T.J. Press, Ltd., 1988), give intriguing arguments for a significant African presence in the western hemisphere long before the Atlantic slave trade.
5. Sir Don Pedro Alonso O'Crouley, *The Kingdom of New Spain 1774* translated and edited by Sean Galvin (John Howell-Books, 1972), 18-19. See also William Mason, "Mex-



- icans from Africa," *Conexoes* (African Diaspora Research Project, Michigan State University, 4 (May 1992), 12.
6. Lonnie G. Bunche III, *Black Angelinos: The Afro-American in Los Angeles, 1850-1950* (Los Angeles: California Afro-American Museum Foundation, 1988), 10-11.
7. Martin Cole and Henry Welcome, eds., *Don Pío Pico's Historical Narrative* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1973), 12-15, 19-21.
8. William Mason and James Anderson, "The Los Angeles Black Community, 1781-1940," *Bulletin* 5 (Los Angeles: L.A. County Museum of Natural History, 1969).
9. Quintard Taylor, "Exploration and Early Settlement, 1528-1850," in "In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West" (Unpublished book manuscript, 1996), 12. See also Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran, "The Integration of the Negro into the National Society of Mexico," in *Race and Class in Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 27; Leslie B. Rout, Jr., *The African Experience in Spanish America: 1502 to the Present Day* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 126-34.
10. O'Crouley, *The Kingdom of New Spain, 1774*, 20-21.
11. The 1850 California state constitution denied suffrage to blacks, Indians, and Asians. That same year the *California State Statutes* denied blacks, Indians, and Asians the right to give evidence in favor of or against whites. *Statutes of California, 1850*, Civil Practices Act, Section 394 (Sacramento, 1850). In 1851 and again in 1860, the California homestead law blocked black access to public land. On April 15, 1852, the Assembly approved legislation for the California Fugitive Slave Act, which decreed that all slaves brought into the state previous to the adoption of the Constitution who refused to return with their masters to the state in which they owed labor would be deemed to be fugitives from labor. It is more than coincidental that in 1852 the African-American Franchise League of San Francisco also launched its petition campaign to repeal the discriminatory right to testimony law.
12. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 49, 51.
13. *Ibid.*, 238.
14. *Thirteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910).
15. Delilah L. Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers of California* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 110.
16. Donna Mungen, *The Life and Times of Biddy Mason: From Slavery to Wealthy Californian Landowner* (Los Angeles: MC Printing Company, 1976).
17. *Los Angeles Times*, 16 January 1891, p. 8.
18. Roger Daniels and Spencer C. Olin, Jr., *Racism in California: A Reader in the History of Oppression* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), vii.
19. Douglas H. Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanites: A Social & Cultural History of Black San Francisco* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980), 45-48.
20. Lawrence B. deGraaf, "The City of Black Angels: Emergence of the Los Angeles Ghetto, 1890-1930," *Pacific Historical Review* 39 (August 1970): 330.

21. Mikel Garcia and Jerry Wright, "Race Consciousness in Black Los Angeles, 1886-1915," *UCLA Center for African American Studies Report* (Spring/Fall 1989): 5.
22. Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanites*, 51-52.
23. Charlotta Bass, *Forty Years: Memoirs from the Pages of a Newspaper* (Los Angeles, 1960), 97.
24. Emory J. Tolbert, *The UNIA and Black Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: UCLA Center for Afro-American Studies, 1980), 337.
25. Mason, *Bulletin* #5 (Los Angeles: LA County Museum of Natural History 1969), 45.
26. Tolbert, *The UNIA in Los Angeles: A Study of Western Garveyism*, (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1975), 93. Tolbert identifies as distinctly African American by the 1920s the neighborhoods of Boyle Heights; Jefferson Street between Normandie and Western Avenue; Temple Street area; Furlong tract; Central Avenue.
27. John Alexander Somerville, *Man of Color: An Autobiography of J. Alexander Somerville, A Factual Report of the Status of the American Negro Today* (Los Angeles: Morrison Publishing Co., 1942), 87.
28. Francis N. Lortie, *San Francisco's Black Community, 1870-1890* (San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, 1970), 35.
29. Francis E. Williams, interview by Les Wills and Bill Reed, tape recording, Los Angeles, California, 28 August 1992, California African American Museum:

Every week they asked me to move to Hollywood. I always like living in the neighborhood where my people were. It was not easy to get houses there. If people saw you at a hotel, they'd say, "What are you doing here?" They had jazz jam sessions in Hollywood, and no Blacks could go to them. So Norman Granz and I—I worked at Old Reb Spikes studio at Jefferson and Normandie and every Sunday they'd set up a jam session there. People came from everywhere. USC art students would come and sketch the audience that was integrated at the jam session it was so kind of special. That must have been about 1943 or 1944 . . .
30. G. William Jones, *Black Cinema Treasures (Lost and Found)* (Denton: University of Texas, 1991), 18.
31. Bruce M. Tyler, "From Harlem to Hollywood: The Struggle for Racial and Cultural Democracy, 1920-1943" (Louisville: unpublished manuscript, 1991), 51-57. Prominent members of the Ink Slingers were a virtual who's who of Los Angeles African American social and civic life during the 1920s and 1930s: Assemblyman Frederick M. Roberts; Noah Thompson, writer, real estate broker, and former leader of the Los Angeles branch of the UNIA; Fay Jackson, pioneering journalist and publisher.
32. Tyler, "From Harlem to Hollywood: The Struggle for Racial and Cultural Democracy, 1920-1930."
33. Alonzo Smith and Quintard Taylor, "Racial Discrimination in the Workplace: A Study of Two West Coast Cities During the 1940s," in the *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 8 (Spring 1980): 35-54. Smith and Taylor provide a comparative analysis of discriminatory

practices toward African Americans in the defense industry using Portland, Oregon, and Los Angeles as case studies. For example, the authors say, with respect to the FEPC, that conditions for black employees in the shipyards became worse after FEPC hearings, and because the agency could not enforce its recommendations, it was often ignored by company officials.

34. Melvin J. Oliver and James H. Johnson, "Inter-Ethnic Conflict in an Urban Ghetto: The Case of Blacks and Latinos in Los Angeles," in *Research in Social Movements: Conflict and Change*, Vol. 6, (Los Angeles: JAI Press, 1984), 57-94.

## Fried, "Keeton and his WPA Chorus," pp. 236-249.

1. *SF Pacific Coast Appeal*, January 18, 1902, p. 4, as quoted in Delores Nason McBroome, "Parallel Communities: African-Americans in California's East Bay, 1850-1963" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1991).

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2. Interview with Shirley Ann Moore, Ph.D., August 23, 1994.
3. Interview with Alfred O'Neill, former Keeton WPA Chorus lead tenor, August 15, 1993.
4. Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (Los Angeles: Times Mirror Printing, 1919), 149, as quoted in Albert S. Broussard, *Black San Francisco, The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993).
5. Interview with Shirley Ann Moore, Ph.D., August 23, 1994.
6. Interview with Jacqueline Cogdell Dje Dje, Ph.D., September 15, 1994.
7. Interview with Ruth Acty, a member of Keeton's ensemble in the Hall Johnson production of *Run Little Chillun'*, July 16, 1994.
8. Interview with Olly W. Wilson, Ph.D., September 9, 1994.
9. Interview with Thomas Pruitt, former Keeton WPA Chorus member, August 18, 1993.
10. Interview with Alfred O'Neill, former Keeton WPA Chorus lead tenor, August 15, 1993.
11. Interview with Thomas Pruitt, former Keeton WPA Chorus member, August 18, 1993.

- 12 Interview with Lawrence P. Crouchett (Ph.D., October 12, 1990)
- 13 Interview with Delores Nason McBroonie (Ph.D., July 29, 1994)
- 14 Interview with Lorraine Crouchett, July 29, 1994
- 15 Interview with Michael Morgan, October 9, 1994
- 16 Interview with Jacqueline Cogdell Dje Dje (Ph.D., September 15, 1994)
- 17 Interview with Newt McDonald, August 18, 1994
- 18 Itabari Njeri, "Sushi and Grits: Ethnic Identity and Conflict in a Newly Multicultural America," in *Lure and Looting*, ed. Gerald Early (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 36.

Sides, "Battle on the Home Front," pp. 250-263.

1. *California Eagle*, 11 December 1941.
2. For an account of industrial training, see Milo P. Johnson, "The Trade and Industrial Education of Negroes in the Los Angeles Area" (M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1945). See also Floyd C. Covington, *The Urban Light*, Los Angeles Urban League, Bulletin No. 10, pp. 14-25.
3. Though wartime conditions have not been explored sufficiently in Los Angeles, the West Coast in general has received more attention than other regions of the U.S. For a thorough treatment of war migrants in the East Bay, see Marilyn S. Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War Two* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993); for a rich contemporary account of race relations in the Kaiser shipyards in the San Francisco Bay area, see Katherine Archibald, *Wartime Shipyard: A Study in Social Disunity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1947); for work specifically on the black challenge to the West Coast Boilermakers, see William H. Harris, "Federal Intervention in Union Discrimination: FEPC and West Coast Shipyards During World War II," *Labor History* 27 (1981): 326-47; and Charles Wollenberg, "James vs. Marinship: Trouble on the New Black Frontier," *California History* 60 (1981): 262-79. The struggle between the Boilermakers and black shipyard workers was particularly poignant in Los Angeles because of the peculiarities of the union's local, Lodge 92. With over 40,000 members, it was the largest Boilermaker lodge on the West Coast. Furthermore, its jurisdiction was wide, including the counties of Santa Barbara, Kern, Inyo, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, and Imperial. Thus, any fight waged by Los Angeles's black shipyard workers would have ramifications all over southern California.
4. For works that cite federal intervention and labor shortage as the primary impetus for African American progress, see Richard Posenberg, *War and Society: The United States 1941-1945* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972); John Morton Blum, *Was I or Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War II* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 196 and 200; and Gerald Nash, *American West Transformed: The Impact of the First and World War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).
5. "Defense Labor Migration in California," *Washington Hearing on Defense Migration* (1942) pg. 6747; Lawrence Brooks deGraat, "Negro Migration to Los Angeles, 1930-1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1962), chapter 4.
6. For a rich discussion of "Defense Okies," see James N. Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), especially chapter 6.
7. Los Angeles Urban League, Los Angeles Urban League Papers, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles, Box 2, Folder 7. For an overview of black employment in Los Angeles during this period, see also Alonzo Nelson Smith, "Black Employment in the Los Angeles Area, 1938-1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1978).
8. James Richard Wilburn, "Social and Economic Aspects of the Aircraft Industry in Metropolitan Los Angeles During World War II" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1972), 165.
9. Hearings Before the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, Western Pipe and Steel Company, Consolidated Steel Corporation (Shipbuilding Division), California Shipbuilding Corporation, Kaiser Corporation, Inc., and Subordinate Lodge 92 and Auxiliary Lodge A-35 of the International Brotherhood of Boiler Makers, Iron Ship Builders and Helpers of America, AFL, Summary, Findings, and Directives in Los Angeles Hearings, November 19 and 20, 1943, Fair Employment Practices Committee, Field Records (hereinafter FEPC Field Records), Region XII, reel 103, University of California, Berkeley.
10. Though the CIO had made some progress in the east-coast shipyards, the AFL's Metal Trade Department achieved national dominance in the shipbuilding industry and became especially powerful on the West Coast. Because the CIO in general, and especially Los Angeles's CIO Industrial Council, were becoming important allies for black workers both inside and outside of the workshop, the AFL's monopoly on such a vital local industry did not bode well for Los Angeles's black shipyard workers. For information on the CIO in wartime Los Angeles, see David Oberweiser, Jr., "The CIO: A Vanguard for Civil Rights in Southern California, 1940-1946," ed. Sally Miller and Daniel A. Cornford, *American Labor in the Era of World War II* (Westport: Praeger, 1995). See also Philip M. Connelly Papers, Special Collections, UCLA.
11. DeGraat, "Negro Migration to Los Angeles, 1930-1950," 189. For discussion of western black historiography, see deGraat, "Recognition, Racism, and Reflections on Writing Western Black History," *Pacific Historical Review* 44 (1975): 22-51.
12. United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor in the South* Bulletin No. 898 (GPO, 1947).
13. DeGraat, "Negro Migration to Los Angeles, 1930-1950," especially chapter VI, "Influx," United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Special Census of Los Angeles, California Population by Race, and Sex by Census Tract*, January 28, 1946 (October 1946). This number was probably significantly greater because the census statistic here only compares the two years 1940 and 1946 and ignores the "third of passage" who came to work and then returned home. Estimates including this group often suggest that there were up to 200,000 black migrants to Los Angeles. See Lonnie G. Bunch, "A Past Not Necessarily Prologue: The Afro-American in Los Angeles," eds. Norman M. Klein and Martin J. Schiesl, *Twentieth Century Los Angeles: Power, Promotion, and Social Conflict* (Regina Books: Claremont, California, 1990), 101-130. For a discussion of black life in wartime Los Angeles, see Keith E. Collins, *Black Los Angeles: The Maturing of the Ghetto, 1940-1950* (Saratoga: Century Twenty-One Publishing, 1980).
14. Board of Harbor Commissioners, *Annual Report of the Board of Harbor Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles, California, Fiscal Year July 1, 1946 to June 30, 1947* (1947), 18-20; "Migration to War-Industry Areas," *Monthly Labor Review*, July 1942, pp. 58-60; "National Defense Migration," *Monthly Labor Review*, January 1942, pp. 48-53.
15. *California Eagle*, 24 February 1943; Collins, *Black Los Angeles*, 21.
16. Herbert Hill, *Black Labor and the American Legal System: Race, Work, and the Law* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985 [1977]), 186; Merl Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement: The President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, 1941-1946* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 267-69.
17. "Resolution Defining Policy With Regard to Colored Members," *Boilermakers Journal* LVI (March 1944): 73.
18. Lester Rubin, *The Negro in the Shipbuilding Industry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970), 49-50.
19. From Collins, *Black Los Angeles*, 63.
20. See Collins, *Black Los Angeles*, 43; see also Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 24-25. For an overview of race relations in wartime Los Angeles, see Kevin Allen Leonard, "Years of Hope, Days of Fear: The Impact of World War II on Race Relations in Los Angeles" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Davis, 1992).
21. Carey McWilliams, "Changing Aspects of the Evacuee Problem on the West Coast," *Monthly Summary of Events and Trends in Race Relations* (August-September, 1944).
22. *Los Angeles Times* 1 January 1944; *California Eagle*, 6 January 1944.
23. *California Eagle*, 4 April 1946.
24. Max Bond, "The Negro in Los Angeles" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Southern California 1936), 94.
25. "Farming for Victory On Home Front," *California Eagle*, 2 March 1944. Historians of black migration rather than portraying the black urban community as a monolithic



- race group, have sought to show the contours and tensions between the older black migrants and the new, largely southern, war migrants. For a good discussion of these tensions in the San Francisco Bay area, see Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush*, especially chapter 4. For a contemporary account of these tensions in the Pacific Northwest see Robert E. Colbert, "The Attitude of Older Residents Toward Recent Negro Migrants in the Pacific Northwest," *Journal of Negro History* XV (Fall 1946): 695-703.
26. Collins, *Black Los Angeles*, 63.
  27. Walter Williams to FEPC, 14 June 1943, FEPC Headquarters Records, microfilm reel 13.
  28. *Calship Log*, California Shipbuilding Magazine, June 1943.
  29. "Testimony of Thomas Madison Doram . . . In and Before the Committee on Fair Employment Practices," 18 November 1943, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 106.
  30. *An Introduction to Shipbuilding*, Shipbuilding Division, Bethlehem Steel Corporation (Washington: GPO, 1942).
  31. "Complaint of Mrs. Thelma Pruitt," n.d., FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 106.
  32. Clarence M. Mitchell, FEPC attorney, to George M. Johnson, FEPC headquarters, 27 October 1943, "Complainants interviewed on October 14 and 15," FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 105.
  33. *California Eagle*, 24 February 1943.
  34. *Ibid.*, 17 and 24 February 1943. For an account of the activities of the People's Independent Church, see E. Frederick Anderson, *The Development of Leadership and Organization Building in the Black Community of Los Angeles from 1900 Through World War II* (Saratoga: Century Twenty-One Publishing, 1980).
  35. Clarence M. Mitchell, FEPC attorney, to George M. Johnson, FEPC headquarters, 26 October 1943, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 105.
  36. For a discussion of Golden State's indispensable role in black Los Angeles, see Ivan J. Houston, "Black Leadership in Los Angeles," interviewed by Ranford B. Hopkins, Oral History Project, University of California, Los Angeles, 1989. See also Charlotta Bass, *Forty Years: Memoirs from the Pages of a Newspaper* (Los Angeles: 1960).
  37. See Bond, "The Negro in Los Angeles," and Lawrence B. deGraaf, "The City of Black Angels: The Emergence of the Los Angeles Ghetto, 1890-1930," *Pacific Historical Review* 39 (August 1970): 323-52.
  38. Garner V. Grayson, Jr., International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, no date, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 103.
  39. *Ibid.*; *California Eagle*, 16 March 1944.
  40. *California Eagle*, 10 February 1943.
  41. "Shipyarders Won't Pay Dues to 'Tom' Outfit," *ibid.*, 8 July 1943.
  42. For an excellent treatment of A. Philip Randolph's union strategy, see William H. Harris, *Keeping the Faith: A. Philip Randolph, Milton Webster, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977).
  43. Frank Reeves to Special Counsel and Staff Working on West Coast Hearings, "Regarding Analysis of Evidence at Hand re-

- garding Situation in Los Angeles Area with Suggestions as to Further Inquiry and Methods of Presentation," FEPC Headquarters Records, reel 13.
44. Walter Williams to FEPC, 22 July 1943, FEPC Headquarters Records, reel 13.
  45. Frank Reeves to Special Counsel and Staff Working on West Coast Hearings, 15 October 1943, FEPC Headquarters Records, reel 13.
  46. *California Eagle*, 14 October 1943.
  47. Frank Reeves to Special Counsel and Staff Working on West Coast Hearings, 15 October 1943, FEPC Headquarters Records, reel 13.
  48. Francis J. Haas, "Documentary Evidence Submitted in Connection with Complaints Against Boilermakers #92," 17 August 1943, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 106.
  49. Clarence M. Mitchell, "Meeting with White Members of Boilermakers Local #92," 28 October 1943, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 105.
  50. Thomas Madison Doram, "Testimony . . .," FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 106.
  51. Hearings Before the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice . . . Los Angeles Hearings, November 19 and 20, 1943, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 103.
  52. *Ibid.*
  53. Chas. J. MacGowan to Western Pipe and Steel, Los Angeles, 15 December 1943, FEPC Headquarters Records, reel 13.
  54. Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, 295-96; Blum, *V Was For Victory*, 194.
  55. *California Eagle*, 6 January 1944.
  56. International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders and Helpers of America, *Proceedings of the Seventeenth Constitutional Convention* (Kansas City, Missouri: The Brotherhood, 1944), Resolution No. 114, p. 336.
  57. Walter E. Williams to "Fellow Shipyarder," Los Angeles, January 1944, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 106.
  58. George M. Johnson to Clarence M. Mitchell, 27 October 1943, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 106; see also Gary Marmorstein, "Central Avenue Jazz: Los Angeles Black Music of the Forties," *Southern California Quarterly* LXX (1988): 415-26.
  59. See Ben Margolis, "Law and Social Conscience," interviewed by Michael S. Balter, 1987, UCLA Oral History Collection.
  60. "Fighting Pastor Warns Against Lethargy," *California Eagle*, 15 June 1944; also, *California Eagle*, 8 June 1944.
  61. *California Eagle*, 27 July 1944.
  62. *Ibid.*, 30 March 1950.
  63. *Ibid.*, 28 September 1944.
  64. *James v. Marinship Corp.*, 25 Cal. 2d, 726 (1945); Wollenberg, "James vs. Marinship"; Hill, *Black Labor*, pp. 204-205.
  65. *California Eagle*, 8 February 1945.
  66. Raymond Thompson, Judge of the Superior Court, "The decree should afford the defendants the following alternatives," 4 June 1945, FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 103.
  67. *California Eagle*, 7 and 14 June 1945.
  68. Smith, "Black Employment in the Los Angeles Area," 57.
  69. For scholarship on twentieth-century civil

rights for African Americans before 1954, see Richard M. Dalfiume, "The 'Forgotten Years' of the Negro Revolution," *Journal of Negro History* 55 (June 1968); Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* 75 (December 1988); Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class, and Power in Twentieth Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); Steven F. Lawson, "Freedom Then, Freedom Now: The Historiography of the Civil Rights Movement," *American Historical Review* 96 (1991): 456-71; Bruce Nelson, "Organized Labor and the Struggle for Black Equality in Mobile during World War II," *Journal of American History* 80 (December 1993).

70. Thomas Madison Doram, "Testimony . . .," FEPC Field Records, Region XII, reel 106.

## Moore, "In Our Own Image," pp. 264-271.

1. Frederick Douglass, "A Tribute for the Negro," *The North Star*, April 7, 1849.
2. For racist stereotypes and depictions of African Americans and other ethnic minorities in California and throughout the country, see issues of *The Wasp* magazine (San Francisco: Wasp Publishing Company), 1876-1928; the *San Francisco Illustrated Wasp* (San Francisco: Wasp Publishing Company), 1876-1880; *Ethnic Notions: Black Images in the White Mind* (Berkeley: Berkeley Art Center, 1982). For historical analysis of African American stereotypes, see George Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971); Marlon Riggs, producer/director, *Ethnic Notions: Black People in White Minds*, a production of California Newsreel, San Francisco, CA, 1987.
3. Romare Bearden and Harry Henderson, *A History of African American Artists from 1792 to the Present* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), 52-53; W. Augustus Low and Virgil A. Clift, *Encyclopedia of Black America* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1981), 194-95.
4. Bearden and Henderson, *A History of African American Artists*, 216-25.
5. *Ibid.*, 216-25; Alain Locke, "The New Negro, 1929," in Abraham Chapman, ed., *Black Voices: An Anthology of Afro-American Literature* (New York: Mentor, 1968), 512-22; Sargent Johnson, interview in *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 6, 1935.
6. Emmanuel Joseph obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, October 5, 1979; D. Willis and H. Dodson, *Black Photographers Bear Witness: One Hundred Years of Social Protest* (Williams College Museum of Art, 1989); Tilghman Press, *We Also Serve* (Berkeley: Tilghman Press, 1945).
7. Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, "Your Life is Really Not Just Your Own: African American Women in Twentieth Century California" (unpublished manuscript, 1996), 20-21.
8. Low and Clift, *Encyclopedia of Black America*, 181-83; Joe Louis Moore, project director, "The Legacy of the Panthers: A Photographic

Exhibition," a project of the Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation (Berkeley, California: Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation, 1995).

# Chamberland, "The House That Bop Built," pp. 272-283.

1. Interview with trumpeter and music educator Alan Smith, December 14, 1992, San Francisco.
2. KRON TV Channel 4 News Special "San Francisco in the Forties," San Francisco.
3. Interview with radio talk-show host Ray LaHaterro, January 1993, Bop City Reunion, Club 36, the Grand Hyatt, San Francisco.
4. Interview with DJ and jazz scholar Dr. Herb Wong, November 19, 1993, Menlo Park.
5. Interview with club owner Jimbo Edwards, January 1995, San Francisco.
6. Interview with drummer and union representative Earl Watkins, June 11, 1994, San Francisco.
7. Interview with club owner Jimbo Edwards, January 1995, San Francisco.
8. Interview with vocalist Mary Stallings, June 10, 1994, San Francisco.
9. Interview with drummer and union representative Earl Watkins, June 11, 1994, San Francisco.
10. Interview with drummer Art Lewis, July 23, 1994, Inverness, CA.
11. Interview with bassist Vernon Alley, June 22, 1995, San Francisco.

12. Interview with saxophonist Vince Wallace, December 16, 1994, Oakland.
13. Interview with jazz fan and San Francisco Redevelopment Agency employee Patricia Nacey, December 3, 1994, San Francisco.
14. Interview with drummer and union representative Earl Watkins, June 11, 1994, San Francisco.
15. Interview with vocalist Mary Stallings, June 10, 1994, San Francisco.
16. Interview with DJ and jazz scholar Dr. Herb Wong, November 19, 1993, Menlo Park.
17. Interview with pianist Flip Nunez, December 10, 1993, Richmond, CA.
18. Interview with attorney Beverly Axelrod, January 1993, Bop City Reunion, Club 36, the Grand Hyatt, San Francisco.
19. Interview with saxophonist Jules Broussard, May 27, 1994, San Francisco.
20. Interview with saxophonist Vince Wallace, December 16, 1994, Oakland.
21. Interview with band leader and saxophonist John Handy, November 12, 1993, San Francisco.
22. Interview with drummer Ray Fisher, June 24, 1994, San Francisco.
23. Interview with pianist Flip Nunez, December 10, 1993, Richmond, CA.
24. Interview with drummer and union representative Earl Watkins, June 11, 1994, San Francisco.
25. Interview with guitarist Eddy Duran, June 24, 1994, San Francisco.
26. Interview with bassist Ameal Hand, June 25, 1994, San Francisco.

27. Interview with drummer Dick Berk, March 23, 1996, Portland, OR.
28. Interview with trumpeter and pianist Tommy Smith, June 3, 1994, Oakland.
29. Interview with bassist Vernon Alley, June 22, 1995, San Francisco.
30. Interview with drummer Dick Berk, March 23, 1996, Portland, OR.
31. Interview with jazz fan and San Francisco Redevelopment Agency employee Patricia Nacey, December 14, 1992, San Francisco.
32. Interview with saxophonist and band leader John Handy, November 12, 1993, San Francisco.
33. Interview with former waitress Wanda Baezek, January 1993, Bop City Reunion, Club 36, the Grand Hyatt, San Francisco.
34. Interview with vocalist Bobbe Norris, June 12, 1994, Pacifica, CA.
35. Interview with vocalist Mary Stallings, June 10, 1994, San Francisco.
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38. Interview with KJAZ founder Pat Henry and club owner Jimbo Edwards, August 4, 1993, Orinda, CA.
39. San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Archives, Western Addition projects A1 and A2, San Francisco.
40. Interview with vocalist Mary Stallings, June 10, 1994, San Francisco.



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# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

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# Milestones in California History—

## “One Hundred Years of Caring”—

### The California State PTA, 1897–1997

On February 17, 1897, in Washington, D.C., Alice McClellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst, widow of Senator George Hearst and mother of newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst, opened a meeting of mothers from throughout the nation. This meeting resulted in the founding of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers (the National PTA), an organization dedicated to the betterment of home and school life for all children. The founding of PTA in California is not as precisely documented as the founding of the national organization. However, the origins of the state congress can be traced to the California Home and School Child Study Association founded in San Francisco on February 26, 1897, with Mrs. Hearst serving as honorary president, and to the Los Angeles Federation of Mothers' Clubs organized in 1900. The California State PTA recognizes 1897 as the birthday of PTA in California, but honors Mrs. W. W. Murphy of the Los Angeles Federation as its founder and first president.

The California Home and School Child Study Association and the Los Angeles Federation of Mothers' Clubs operated separately at first, but began working together around 1900. Until 1902 representatives from both groups attended meetings of the National PTA, and this created confusion about official representation from California. However, there was little competition between the two groups, since, in the words of an early PTA historian, “The PTA is one organization where the advancement of child welfare all over the state has always been considered before sectional rivalry.” The California Congress became a single statewide organization, renamed the California Congress of Mothers and Study Circles, on November 12, 1902, with national affiliation the same year. In 1925 it incorporated as the Congress of Parents and Teachers, popularly called the California State PTA. Nearly twenty years ago the PTA began recognizing student members. By 1912 both the state presidency and the annual state convention site began a tradition of alternating between northern and southern parts of the state.

Today, one hundred years after its founding, the California State PTA is the parent organization for 31 PTA districts, 205 councils, and approximately 4,000 elementary and secondary school-based PTAs. Each association elects its own officers and independently approves its budget and program. More than one million Californians join local PTAs annually to support activities that improve the education, health, and well-being of children. Over the years, PTA volunteers in California have worked to support juvenile protection and child labor laws, to establish school lunch programs, to promote school libraries, to operate vaccination and health screening programs, to encourage the education of migrant children, to write and distribute media literacy information, and to fight for public school funding. The organization's Honorary Service Award program funds scholarships for students, teachers, and school nurses, and its annual Founders Day Offering supports training programs for PTA leaders throughout the state. A newsletter, PTA in California, is issued eight times per year, and other publications are designed to help parents raise successful children and become involved in the improvement of schools. The Cal-



Phoebe Apperson Hearst, ca. 1897, provided funds to pay for the first meeting of the National PTA, held on February 17, 1897, in Washington, D.C. She also served as the honorary president of the California Home and School Child Study Association, founded in San Francisco on February 26, 1897, and known today as the California State PTA. Courtesy California State PTA.

ifornia State PTA's annual convention, held each spring, brings together more than 3,000 PTA leaders for three days of speakers, conferences, awards, and PTA business. Delegates to past conventions have adopted and acted upon resolutions on such diverse topics as motion pictures and television, school bus safety, AIDS education, school nutrition programs, family life education, and class-size reduction.

PTA members throughout California are currently celebrating the organization's 100th birthday. These celebrations include a float, depicting a museum field trip, in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade on January 1, 1997, and a February 17 Founders Day reception at Castlewood Country Club, the historic, Pleasanton home of Phoebe Apperson Hearst.

As the PTA begins its second century of commitment to children and youth in California, its members continue to respond to founder Alice McClellan Birney's appeal in 1897 “to all mankind and to all womankind, regardless of race, color, or condition, to recognize that the republic's greatest work is to save the children.”

ANN DESMOND  
Vice President for Organizational Services,  
California State PTA

FRONT COVER: *Field Hands at Mission San Jose del Cabo*, by Joanne Crosby, in *Antigua California*, by Harry W. Crosby, 1994, after an original drawing by Ignacio Tirsch, in *The Drawings of Ignacio Tirsch: A Jesuit Missionary in Baja California*, 1972. Courtesy of Joanne and Harry W. Crosby. A distinct piece of history and art, the original image is a rare illustration depicting pre-Franciscan Baja California. An article about California's earliest farmworkers appears in this issue. BACK COVER: *Henry Raschen* (ca. 1854–1938), *Indian Camp Near Fort Ross*, 1886, oil on canvas, 30¼ x 40 in. California Historical Society, Louis Sloss, Jr., Collection, photo by Cecile Keefe.

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Watercolor facsimile of original drawing of field hands and other laborers on Mission San José del Cabo. Drawing by Joanne Crosby, from Harry W. Crosby, *Antigua California* (Albuquerque, 1994), based on original drawings in *The Drawings of Ignacio Tirsch, A Jesuit Missionary in Baja California* (Los Angeles: Dawson's Bookshop, 1972), introduced and edited by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr.

# First Farmworkers, First *Braceros*

## Baja California Field Hands and the Origins of Farm Labor Importation in California Agriculture,

On a hot afternoon late in June 1828, 38-year-old French sea captain August Bernard Duhaut-Cilly arrived at Mission Santa Barbara, one of the most successful missions of Alta California, just in time to enjoy a celebration in honor of Saint John the Baptist. Captain Duhaut-Cilly's ship, *Le Héros*, was anchored off shore, and he had taken advantage of the layover to spend a few days touring the area. He had enjoyed a huge feast with the padre and hundreds of Chumash Indians, and was at the point of walking out on an interminable two hours of what he regarded as cruel and barbarous bull-fights, when he witnessed a curious game: Indian farmworkers vainly struggling to climb a greased pole topped with rewards of clothes and trinkets. According to his diary, he watched one man after another fail at this, and then looked up and saw a young Cochimi Indian field hand from one of the Baja California missions, twenty-two years of age, "perfectly formed . . . of a robust constitution," who by means of scraping the grease from the pole, and spreading ashes on it, managed to make it to the top and grab all of the prizes. The Chumash natives, in a rage, bellowed at the Baja field hand and confederated against him, but none could match his agility, vigor, or the grace of his movements.

Continuing to compete at other games, the Baja field hand won every race, even against the very best of the Chumash runners. Duhaut-Cilly could not take his eyes off the young man, largely because he feared that the Chumash might do him harm and bodily remove him from the field. Eventually the games ended, and the following day Duhaut-Cilly sailed south to San Pedro. But he never forgot the young Baja field hand. "A light piece of stuff was about his loins; and when he was running nothing concealed from sight the vigor and grace of his movements," he later wrote in his journal. Mar-

veling only at the young man's grace and beauty, and his physical appearance, Duhaut-Cilly failed to perceive the historical and demographic significance of that solitary field hand. Writing essentially as a tour guide, and knowing nothing of the development of mission agriculture and the key role Baja field hands had played in developing it, he could neither formulate nor ask the most important questions. Why, out of all the farmworkers at Mission Santa Barbara, was there only this one, solitary Cochimi boy? How had he traveled to Mission Santa Barbara? Why was he so far from home? And what kind of life did he lead in Alta California?<sup>1</sup>

Duhaut-Cilly did not address these questions. Nor did any other traveler. Baja California field hands working at the missions of Alta California seldom inspired among contemporaries much more than passing curiosity and idle commentary. They fared no better at the hands of later scholars. Labor historians ignore them, and church historians barely do a better job. Their descriptions are sketchy, with Baja field hands emerging from their accounts as bit players. The net effect of these omissions has been to create a distorted picture of California farmworkers and denied them their roots. It is as if in writing their collective biography, historians conspired to arbitrarily amputate such salient facts as where farmworkers first came from, who they were, and what brought them into the fields.<sup>2</sup>

But while the missions' Baja field hands have been slighted and taken for granted, they are hardly unimportant or ephemeral. No comprehensive history of agricultural workers in California can ignore them. They were the region's first farmworkers. Separated from their families and homes, forced to march hundreds of miles overland, they were the most important workers in the Spanish missions during the years 1769 to 1790. They cleared and plowed





Is this the first picture of California farmworkers? Between September 10 and 25, 1791, a one-time cabin boy and later official artist, José ("Pepe") Cardero, sketched scenes around the Monterey Presidio while the Spanish expedition of which he was part anchored in Monterey Bay for a month of rest and recuperation. The workers in the foreground are probably not Baja field hands, and their exact task is open to speculation. *José Cardero, Vista del Presidio de Monte Rey. Original in the Museo Naval, Madrid, Spain, copy in the Robert B. Honeyman Collection, Bancroft Library.*

the first fields, planted the first vineyards, made the first wine, harvested the first grain, irrigated the first crops, trained the first generation of local farm laborers, and more than any other group—more than the padres themselves—were responsible for establishing agriculture. They were very different from modern farmworkers or even their immediate successors, and their example provides perspective on the extent to which agricultural labor changed over time. Trailblazers as well as farmworkers, Baja field hands played an extremely complicated role, one with broad, overlapping duties and responsibilities. But more than anything else they functioned as cheap, docile workers. Brought in under an elaborate program to plug a labor shortage, Baja field hands were, in effect, California's first *braceros*. The work they did, the lives they lived, the obstacles they overcame, force a reassessment of assumptions about when, where, why, and how farm labor importation began in California.

On May 14, 1769, a group of sick, exhausted, half-starved, and dehydrated Indian field hands, whose gaunt faces and skeleton-like bodies evinced their ordeal, drove teams of oxen and mules and wagons into the southwestern coastal area of California. They mark the beginning of the farmworker story. With them was a rag-tag collection of soldiers, "sappers" (trail breakers), muleteers, and missionaries. They had come from the northernmost Spanish missions on the Mexican peninsula of Baja (Lower) California. Now, bypassing dozens of native *rancherías* (villages) that commanded the area, they were headed for the vicinity of an almost forgotten baysite called San Diego de Alcalá, where a group of explorers, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, and others from Spain, had preceded them as early as 227 years before. Late in the afternoon, they halted their teams. Both the animals and men could go no farther. They needed a rest. It had been a long, slow, and scurvy-ravaged journey, at least 350 miles across unmapped



frontier territory. Along the way, thirty of forty-four field hands had died or deserted. Struggling to prevent further catastrophe, the fourteen survivors now foraged for food and cared for the sick and dying. On July 1, they were joined by the survivors of another contingent of Baja field hands, twelve of forty-two mission Indians who had accompanied Father Junipero Serra's expedition from Loreto, some 700 miles to the south. Together they helped the padres erect huts and a crude chapel. Two weeks later, fifteen of the field hands trekked north with an expedition to search for Monterey Bay, leaving eleven survivors behind to join in ceremonies consecrating the site as Mission San Diego de Alcalá, the first Spanish mission in Alta California.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly, the Baja field hands raised a cross and began work on an adobe church. Living in brush shelters, the stranded Indians survived not by farming and harvesting crops, but by gathering wild roots

and seeds, snaring rabbits and mudhens, measuring out the meager rations shipped from Mexico, and scouring food from the nearby beach and wetlands. On August 15, Diegueño Indians from the ranchería of Cosoy attacked the mission, killing Serra's servant and wounding a padre, a blacksmith, and one of the Baja field hands. That winter, before the Monterey expedition returned, six more Baja field hands died. On February 11, 1770, two of the men went south with a resupply ship. On March 23 the vessel *San Antonio* docked with a contingent of ten more field hands, and on April 17 five of them departed north with a second expedition to Monterey to found Mission San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo (Carmel). Huddled together, "smelling frightfully of mules" on the verge of starvation, the field hands at Mission San Carlos existed in their flimsy frontier encampment under conditions as miserable and perilous as those endured by their comrades at Mission San Diego. But



A Baja field hand (lower left), Father Juan Crespi (center), and soldiers just south of the entrance to San Francisco Bay, October 31, 1769. The field hand was one of fifteen Baja field hands accompanying the Portola expedition north from San Diego. Drawing by Arthur B. Dodge, from Father Zephyrin Engelhardt *The Missions and Missionaries of California* (San Francisco: James Barry Company, 1912).



even if the forlorn farmworkers had considered leaving after that, they could not have done so. They were stranded on the frontier and had no choice but to make the best of it. The Baja field hands would remain in Alta California, and hereinafter their lives and the lives of thousands of other farmworkers would be inextricably tied to the strange and stark outposts that, as colonizing instruments, were known as the Spanish missions.<sup>4</sup>

Spanish missions were recent additions to Alta California when the Baja field hands helped found them. Semi-fortified, plantation-like communities surrounded by fields, orchards, vineyards, and ranchos, and organized eventually around lovely white-washed churches and chapels, Spanish missions resembled a cross between a European monastery

and a small feudal town. keystones of Spanish frontier expansion, they served as political, administrative, and military centers, and as resting points, havens sometimes protected by nearby *presidios* (military garrisons) and armed soldiers. The missions and their initial inhabitants were transplanted north from Mexico in 1768, as the result of the machinations of one of the most remarkable men of the era, José de Gálvez, who was assisted by his emissary, the equally remarkable Junipero Serra, so-called "father of California," and other padres. Gálvez was visitor-general of New Spain, and he had moved to Mexico in 1765. He was probably the most ardent expansionist in the Western Hemisphere, the most powerful figure in Mexico, a domineering personality who at times went temporarily insane, believed



Native farmworkers cleared land with the most rudimentary of tools, ranging in effectiveness from machetes and axes to hand rakes and crowbars. Their plows were exceedingly crude and consisted of a sturdy, forked tree branch lashed to a long, heavy wooden beam, and yoked to a team of oxen by means of a straight branch tied behind their horns with thongs, so that instead of pulling by their shoulders as in northern Europe, the oxen drew the plows from their foreheads with their noses turned up and in great pain. Men walked to the side of the oxen, not directly behind them, guiding their plows with one hand and driving their teams with the other. Because the plows lacked mould-boards and had only small shares (tips) of hammered metal, farmworkers could not cut through the hard top layer of dry, virgin ground and had to wait until rain softened the soil before going to work. With these crude instruments, which were always in disrepair, they gouged not furrows, but shallow ruts three or four inches deep, crossing and recrossing fields many times, so that when they finished, they spoke of a field as *la cruzada*—the crossed one. Drawing by Arthur B. Dodge in Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Gabriel Mission and the Beginnings of Los Angeles* (San Gabriel: Mission San Gabriel, 1927).



he was variously God Himself, Montezuma, and the King of Sweden, and once proposed to subdue rebellious Sonoran Indians by importing 600 Guatemalan apes as soldiers.<sup>5</sup>

Farmworkers figured prominently in the plans of José de Gálvez and his associates. Indeed the colonizers could not hope to succeed without them. They had decided that they could profit politically and spiritually by planting new missions in Alta California, which would enable them to block the Russians from settling the northwest coast, while controlling more territory and extending the reach of the Spanish empire without engaging in a full-scale conquest and colonization. On these grounds they persuaded a compliant King Charles III to authorize their plans and endorse Serra's petition to establish his first mission far north of any other, at a remote spot that by a process that seemed logical became Mission San Carlos, near Monterey. San Diego de Alcalá would serve as a way-station or staging ground and supplementary mission along the route north to what would eventually become a string of twenty-one missions, each one a short march apart, located near water sources, fertile soil, and Indian settlements between San Diego and a point just north of San Francisco. Farmworkers would become the essential element required for the successful completion of this project. Without their labor the padres could not expect to survive, not to mention feed large numbers of local Indians they hoped to Christianize. At the time of their creation, Missions San Diego and San Carlos had a farmworker population of just twenty-seven or twenty-eight imported Baja field hands, but at the height of the mission era half a century later, the number of Alta California Indian field hands on the string of twenty-one missions had swelled to many thousands.<sup>6</sup>

Serra and the other Spanish missionaries did not venture into the New World intent on creating such an agricultural proletariat. They had no idea that they were planting the malevolent seed from which sprouted the malignant crop of downtrodden field hands. They were pious, zealous, hard-bitten Franciscans, members of the Catholic order founded by Saint Francis of Assisi in 1215. Paternalistic "fishers of men" who supposedly lived by a vow of poverty and believed only the poor passed through the gates of heaven, Franciscans identified with the poor. Emulating peasants, they walked rather than rode on horseback, dressed modestly, often went barefoot rather than wearing shoes, ate whatever food was offered them, and ministered to the people as op-posed to living a monk-like, contemplative

existence as did some other missionaries. At once statesmen, ambassadors, advisors, teachers, superintendents, magistrates, farmers, explorers, emissaries, and one-man tribunals, Franciscans served as cultural and religious vanguards of conquest. Working isolated and alone on the frontier in the remotest corners of New Spain, they carried the daunting responsibility of creating utopia according to their values. In the Franciscan dream, missionaries would roll back the frontier, convert natives, and build missions that would one day incorporate all of California's people.<sup>7</sup>

For two and one-half centuries, Franciscan missionaries (and their brothers in the Word, the Jesuits) collected hundreds of thousands of natives and, while accompanying Spanish expeditions, tried to do their best to ensure "that the conquest be a Christian apostolic one and not butchery," as the first bishop of Mexico explained. Following feudal Castillian precepts about race, religion, and civilization, they endeavored to convert the "neophytes" (as they called recently Christianized New World Indians) into devout disciples of God, to train them in various skills, and to transform the natives from "baby birds," their wings too weak for flight, into tax-paying *gente de razón* (people of reason), and loyal, lower-class subjects of the Crown. Within ten years, according to Franciscan theory, the neophytes would become self-sufficient Spaniards who would then take over the missions and convert them into towns. But the padres could not import enough supplies to sustain these efforts. Since Spain provided only minimal financial support, the perennially underfinanced missions could not proceed with their projects without quickly becoming self-sustaining. So, wherever they went, the padres put the Indians to work, mainly in the fields. As a result, on missions scattered from the Caribbean south into Paraguay and Chile and north through Mexico, Florida, and New Mexico, thousands upon thousands of indigenous people labored on Spanish mission farms, so many that it was often said that next to Christianity, agricultural work was the principal lesson the padres taught native peoples of South America, Central America, and the American southwest.<sup>8</sup>

A large portion of the Alta California native men in the 30-mile-wide strip along the coast, whatever their wishes and economic standing, were in a real sense destined to suffer this same plight, to become field hands. But not immediately. The process of converting wilderness to productive fields was no less than a desperate matter of life or death. On the Spanish frontier, one thousand miles from the nearest supply port in Mexico, missionaries needed Indians to help them immediately establish the farms and

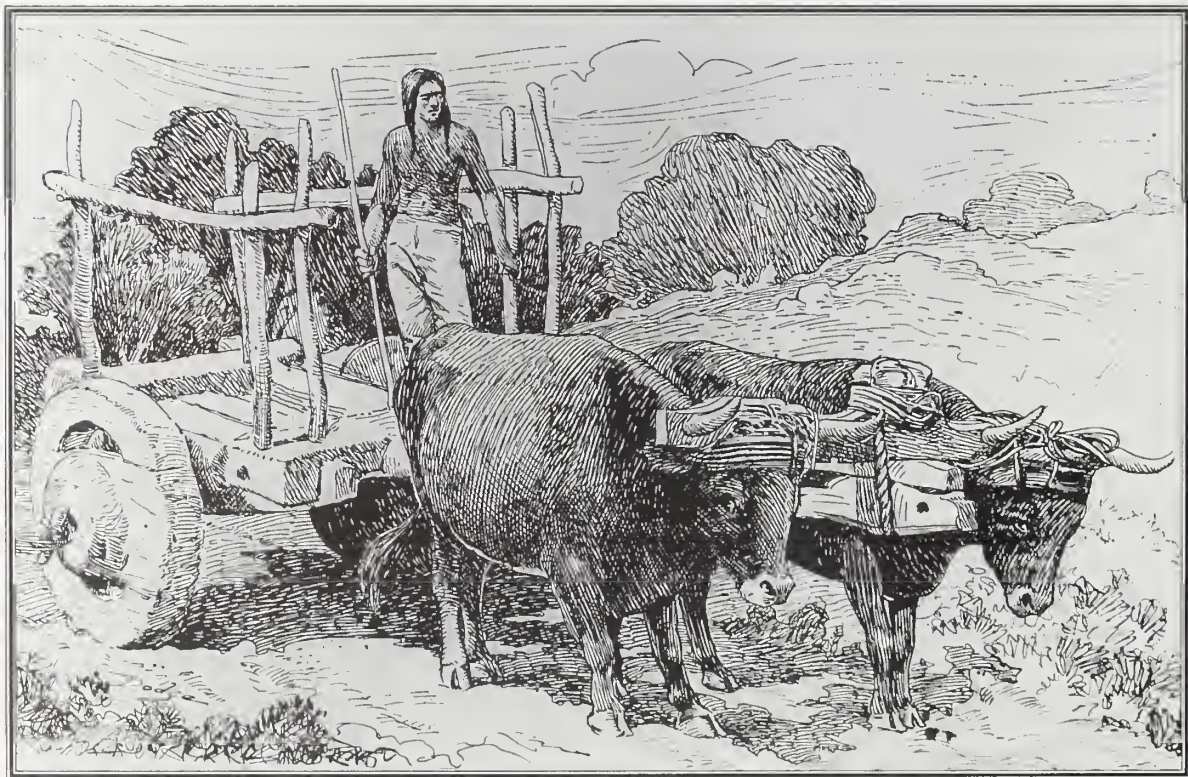


grow the crops necessary to first prevent starvation and to make their outposts self-sufficient. They had to do this quickly and efficiently. Two centuries of missionary experience in the New World had taught the padres that the best way to proceed was not to rely on local natives in the beginning. Unfamiliar with European style farming, Alta California natives would require considerable instruction before they learned European-style agriculture. Moreover, there was a communication problem: neither the padres nor the natives could speak the other's language. For this reason, when founding their missions padres always followed a very specific procedure.<sup>9</sup>

Careful to bring along enough soldiers for protection, and to stock enough supplies to see them through the first months, they went to great pains in choosing faithful, hard-working, Christianized Indian farm laborers from existing missions. Already trained in the intricacies of agriculture and able to rapidly size-up the situation and deploy with minimal supervision, such workers were routinely shifted from well-established missions to the new

ones. Venturing north, Serra and his men adhered to this time-honored strategy. If farming was to go forward, if any field work was to be done in Alta California during the first years of settlement, indeed if the missions themselves were to survive, they would have to rely on outsiders, on imported workers. They would have to depend on the Baja field hands.<sup>10</sup>

And so, by default, the Baja field hands became Alta California's first farmworkers. But these were not just any Baja field hands. The padres were very selective in choosing who would assist in colonization. They had to be. The native field hands of the Baja California missions were hardly uniform in behavior and characteristics. They roughly divided into two groups: the Guaycuras, who lived south of Loreto, the main supply port and mission town midpoint on the eastern coast of the Baja peninsula, and the Cochimíes, who lived to the north. The latter were the more dependable and, according to the padres, had a "noble nature" and made the best field hands, while the former, especially the Pericú branch



The *carreta*, or Spanish wagon, universal conveyance in the early days of farm labor on the Spanish missions. Described by one traveler as "the rudest specimen of wheeled vehicle I have ever seen," a *carreta* sported a heavy frame resting directly on a wooden axle and large, spokeless, not very round wheels made of three solid pieces of joined lumber. Drawn by a long pole running from the axle to the yoke, where it was attached same as with a plow, it placed a huge load on the heads and horns of the oxen as field hands drove the cart over rutted roads. Drawing by Arthur B. Dodge in Zephyrin Engelhardt, *Santa Barbara Mission* (San Francisco: The James H. Barry Company, 1923).





By the time Baja field hands faded from the scene, the crude barracks in which they had lived had generally been replaced, or were being improved by construction of the type of adobe quarters here seen surrounding Mission San Buenaventura. Note the grain grinding apparatus in the foreground. Photograph by Carleton E. Watkins, ca. 1880. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*

of the southernmost Guaycuras left the worst record as far as the padres were concerned. Furthermore, the more northerly Cochimí tribes spoke a Yuman dialect that proved useful in dealing with other natives. Consequently, when they ventured into Alta California, the padres brought along only the most loyal and trusted Baja field hands from the Cochimí tribes at Missions Santa María and San Borja. They would be the first people to engage in agricultural labor on the California missions.<sup>11</sup>

The mechanisms that brought Cochimí field hands north are not exactly clear, shrouded by the vagueness of mission legend and surviving evidence. Some activist scholars of farmworkers would like to believe that the Baja field hands were essentially precursors, the earliest example of imported farm labor, the beginning of a stream of workers brought in and used to undermine the local work force. They assert that certain aspects of farm labor have been present from the beginning, that ever since the Baja field hands arrived, agriculture in California has looked abroad and tapped into pools of foreign workers. This interpretation, which links Spanish colonial labor practices to modern California farm labor tra-

ditions, is not widely accepted by writers, but achieves its most strident tone in an interview that an influential Marxist historian and agricultural journalist, Sam Kushner, gave toward the end of his career. According to this view, the Baja field hands had a submissive psychology and cowered in fear of the padres much as farmworkers cowered under the sway of growers two centuries later.<sup>12</sup>

The Kushner interview and similar interpretations are open to considerable misgiving. Both the politics and the motivation are questionable, and the claim lacks documentation and seems a simplification, but it does not fly in the face of mission history or some of what historians know about the workers. Baja field hands did not come to the missions under any contractual arrangement. They were not immigrant laborers, venturing abroad in search of opportunity to improve their lives and the lives of their families. Nor did they volunteer to make the journey. They were average mission Indians. Their agonizing ordeal overland from Mexico to the fields of Alta California was every bit as difficult as—or worse than—that suffered by Chinese and Japanese farmworkers who would sail east a century later,



packed tightly into the holds of leaky ships, or the undocumented Mexicans found lost, abandoned, and wandering in the desert of southern Arizona while trying to cross the border three-quarters of a century after that. The Indians had lived a most tenuous existence on the sixteen Baja California missions and thirty-two mission stations, dying out at a frightening rate. In Alta California, they were destined to endure more of the same.<sup>13</sup>

At Mission San Borja, in the middle of the Baja peninsula, with its limited water supply and arable land, Indian field hands were often sent into the desert to scavenge for food, returning to the mission in relays, every three or four weeks, to attend mass and live and work on the mission farm. On the more prosperous missions, Indians became infected with *mal gálico* (syphilis) and gonorrhea from the Spanish troops, and they constantly suffered from epidemics of measles and other diseases for which they lacked immunity. They were apparently dying off in such great numbers that the padres feared that within a generation they would become extinct as a people. The Indians did not trek north to escape these dire circumstances. They had experienced years of subordination in Baja California, first under the Jesuit, then the Franciscan, padres, who kept them in constant motion from poor missions where there was an overabundance of labor, but no water or arable land, to the better ones where the opposite situation prevailed. They did as they were told. When on March 22, 1769, Fray Juan Crespí of Mission Purísima brought the first group of Baja field hands from Missions San Borja and Santa Mariá together with volunteers, muleteers, and soldiers at Velicatá, and marched them north two days later, and when Serra brought the second group into Mission Loreto and sent them overland to San Diego on March 28, the Baja field hands were simply doing what they had grown accustomed to doing: packing up, leaving family and children behind, and traveling to some new spot to plant and tend the fields that would sustain yet another Spanish mission.<sup>14</sup>

The twenty-seven or twenty-eight Baja field hands who constituted the first farmworkers in California are not the ones commemorated in paintings and other idyllic depictions of mission agriculture. Indeed, there is not even one sketch of any of them. But what is known of their lives suggests a sharp picture of farmworkers who were very different, and yet in many ways very similar, to those of today. Baja field hands were not just harvesters. They did not do one task, or even a combination of two or three, like modern farm workers. Rather they were general workers, roustabouts, part farmer, part farmworker, part mule driver, part construction laborer, part black-

smith. But more than anything else, the early Baja field hands were people intimately connected to the process of exploration, colonization, and settlement. Before settling down to cultivate the land, most of their work was as "sappers" (trailblazers) who used axe, spade, or machete to cut brush and open passageways for the Spanish expeditions. Hacking out a path through a strange land, they were the advance guard for the mule train that typically followed.<sup>15</sup>

Farmworkers have never been viewed this way, as buckskin explorers, as people who ventured into and confronted the unknown. The fact that they were pioneers with wilderness skills who worked far from home has been entirely eliminated from their story. In the early travel literature, scientific reports, adventure novels, popular biographies, and even in modern, well-researched scholarly histories of western exploration, they do not receive even a mere footnote or token acknowledgement. Yet their adventure was as significant as that of any member of the Lewis and Clark expedition, their challenge as daunting as those faced by members of the Great Survey teams, their sacrifices and exploits as heroic as those of Jedediah Smith and other western fur trappers. Measured according to mileage covered, they had few equals. Evaluated according to work done, they had no rivals.<sup>16</sup>

Baja field hands knew the ordeal and fantastic test of endurance required of long expeditions over harsh terrain. They experienced great hardships, became so ill they received last rites, heard their friends chanting their death songs when supplies ran low with no chance of rescue, saw men go mad with fatigue and exposure and stagger out of the deserts hollow-eyed, sun-burned, and babbling incoherently. Working far from civilization, many never returned to the families and the homes they left behind. Famine, scurvy, and solitude were their constant companions. Bears prowled the woods and the waist-high mustard fields around the farms they worked. Death and sickness stalked them night and day. Perils and hardships were everywhere. When small crews of Baja field hands drawn from the original San Diego group ventured out with pack trains on the various expeditions, they often found themselves entirely alone.

In the sandy bottom lands near Missions San Carlos and San Diego, and on the raw plains near the missions established in 1771 at San Antonio and San Gabriel, and in 1772 at San Luis Obispo, they threw themselves into the heavy, back-breaking "set-up work"—the arduous tasks of clearing land, pulling tree stumps, hacking away at roots, moving boulders, digging ditches and wells, throwing brush dams across rivers, excavating diversion ditches, and laying out irrigation systems. When their tools broke

and there were no blacksmiths to fix them, they rigged repairs, lashed together implements with rawhide straps, or continued working with digging sticks and sometimes their bare hands. When water was too distant, they carried it to their gardens in cowhide buckets suspended from *palos* (poles). With arms outstretched crucifixion-style to steady the poles resting on their shoulders, they walked among the plants, pausing to set the buckets down and ladle water one precious gourdful at a time. In doing so, they established the first missions' irrigated fields. Soldiers offered no help in these and other duties, although the padres, most of whom had considerable farming experience from their tenure in Mexico, sometimes assisted in the fields. But not for long. The padres provided supervision and blessings. The Baja field hands supplied the muscle and sweat.<sup>17</sup>

Baja field hands persisted and overcame their circumstances, fought through their fears, did their jobs, and supplied the labor required for feeding the Spanish incursion into Alta California. But for all their diligence, skill, and hard work, they could just barely survive. Drought, floods, and frosts wiped out most of their first crops, and even though they managed to replant everything and salvage a few bags of grain, they could not overcome the poor judgment of their superiors, who persisted in planting the wrong crops, in the wrong places. Well into the 1770s they were still living on the ragged edge, surviving on roots, seeds, and nuts donated by or bartered from local Indians, and on a gruel made of boiled wheat and dried chickpeas. Fighting for their lives, they declined rapidly in strength, numbers, and effectiveness. There were never enough of them, and while the padres corrected some farming problems—by importing more and better tools and work animals, by moving missions San Diego, San Antonio, and San Carlos to better agricultural sites, and by fitting crops to conditions—the missionaries unceasingly complained that the lack of field hands crippled agriculture and imperiled the missions.<sup>18</sup>

Especially during the arduous first months of land clearing, the problems originating with the inadequate numbers of Baja field hands called forth a loud chorus of protest. Reporting insufficient plantings and starving pagans, the padres complained that meager crops and scarce food jeopardized their main tasks of attracting and converting natives and settling the land. "It seems," Viceroy Bucareli y Ursúa wrote, "that the great progress of the spiritual conquest was only suspended by the lack of foodstuffs to maintain the Indians in the mission enough time for their instruction." To all these people, the small numbers of Baja field hands, at first seen as a minor difficulty, increasingly appeared to be a major disruptive force

that hindered agricultural development and thereby halted the growth of missions. The solution, many believed, lay in the expansion of the Baja farm labor force, which they hoped would increase the food supply and therefore draw more pagans to the missions. The idea, explained Father Serra, was that more Baja field hands would extend the plantings, the local Indians would "see the cornfields which appear wonderful in their eyes" and the missionaries would have "a granary to fill them [natives] with food—and catch them in the nets of heaven."<sup>19</sup>

Because of their critical importance to early mission life, Baja field hands soon became the center of considerable debate. Hoping to obtain more of them, and to circumvent resistance by Governor Pedro Fages, who Serra believed had withheld the food supplies necessary for attracting local natives as farmworkers, Serra traveled to Mexico City to appeal directly to Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, the new viceroy. Arriving in February 1773, Serra outlined the situation and lobbied for increased mission support, which included his maneuvers to have Governor Fages removed from office. In the process, Serra delivered what amounts to the first extended brief for a farm labor importation program. Summoning arguments that have been repeated historically by others who have lobbied for foreign farmworkers, Serra predicted dire consequences if he did not obtain the extra manpower. Because of lack of labor, he reported, crops had failed or not been planted at all, and thus he had not been able to gather large numbers of local natives at the missions. Promising success when he obtained more field hands and established large and productive farms, Serra drew up a detailed report, or *Representación*. Containing thirty-two other requests covering every phase of mission life, from soldiers to colonists, the *Representación* was a remarkable document that would later become central to the case for Serra's sainthood. Baja field hands figured prominently in it. The document represents the mission system's, and thereby California's, first piece of farmworker legislation, in effect a "Bill of Rights" for farmworkers.<sup>20</sup>

If Serra's proposal were adapted, Baja field hands would no longer be forced to trek north. Instead, they "should come of their own free will," as Serra put it. Perhaps anticipating that the end of compulsion would cause a shortfall of workers, Serra also attempted to identify new sources of labor, particularly peons from the vicinity of San Blas, Baja Indian boys, and even entire families, including women. The latter he proposed to maintain as family units and good examples who would reassure and lure other



native families. On May 6, 1773, Bucareli granted Serra's request, except for the recruitment of peons. After further edicts, including the removal of Governor Fages and allocation of blacksmiths, workmen, pack animals, oxen, and supplies, Bucareli issued a remarkable directive. Entitled the *Reglamento* (Regulation) of 1773, it was essentially a temporary law governing treatment of laborers. Placing all responsibilities for the Indians in the hands of the missionaries, it ordered the padres to serve them as parents love and teach their children.<sup>21</sup>

But it was one thing to promulgate such doctrine, and quite another to implement it in practice. However well-intentioned and important the *Reglamento* of 1773 was as a marker in the long and sorry story of failed efforts to extend legal rights to farmworkers, the document did little good. In mid-June a second big group of imported Baja field hands—ten Cochimi Indian families and twelve unmarried Cochimi Indian boys from Mission Santa Gertrudis—gathered into yet another overland expedition. Marching north, they arrived at Mission San Luis Obispo on July 21, 1773, after a journey of some five weeks. For most of them, the overland trek would neither be the last, nor the worst, of what they would have to endure. For one in particular, it was the beginning of one of the most incredible adventures imaginable.<sup>22</sup>

Traversing the Baja peninsula with a huge supply expedition, this second contingent of field hands rested at San Diego on August 30, and then set out for Mission San Luis Obispo by way of Mission San Gabriel. When they camped at San Gabriel on October 2, the entire mission turned out and honored them two days later with a mass and sermon. It was like the second coming of the "Sacred Expedition" of 1769-70. After an eight-day layover, the expedition continued on to Mission San Luis Obispo, leaving six Cochimi families and six Cochimi boys at San Gabriel.

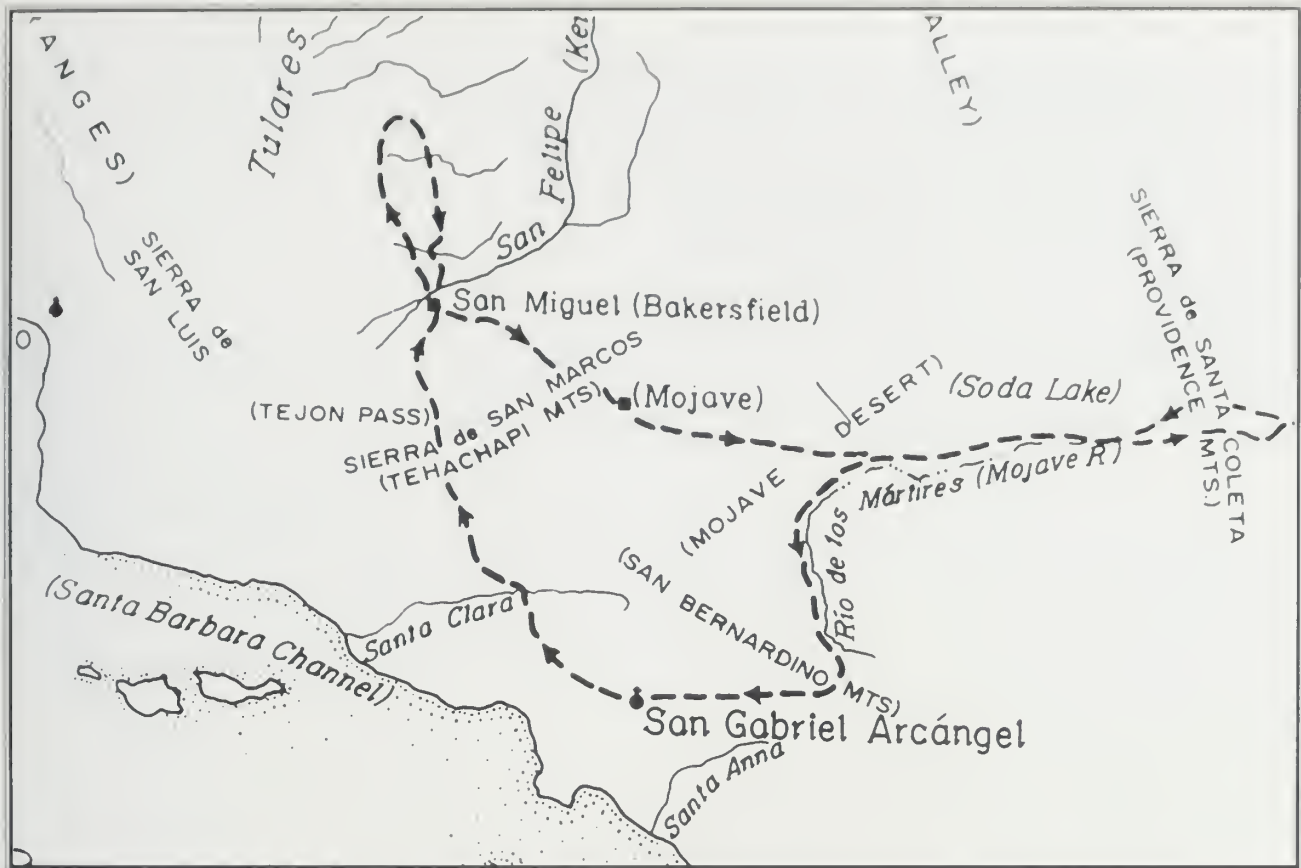
Placed in charge of seventy-three recently baptized local Gabrielino Indians, the Cochimi families were immediately directed to begin digging irrigation ditches, erecting brush dams, and planting corn, wheat, and beans in the black loamy soil along the Los Angeles River near the Indian village of Yang-Na. But the farm work did not go well. The Cochimi could not communicate with the Gabrielinos, who spoke an entirely different language. Nor did they like having to live in tiny huts next to the Gabrielino barracks or being denied rations so that they had to feed themselves from their own gardens and resources. The Cochimi wanted a separate mission of their own. They always remained separate from local Gabrielino farmworkers, and grew increasingly miserable and discontented. Eventually the

supernumerary at Mission San Gabriel, Padre Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, raised the issue in a complaint to his superiors at the College of San Fernando. But no action was ever taken to rectify the problem.<sup>23</sup>

Soon one Baja family, that of Sebastián Tarabal (in some accounts spelled Taraval), became homesick. Taking with them a young Cochimi boy (perhaps his brother), Tarabal and his wife deserted the mission and attempted to return to their former home at Mission San Gertrudis. But instead of taking the road by which they had come, they struck out across the vast Mojave Desert, on an uncharted route, keeping far to the east to avoid soldiers. All but Tarabal perished before friendly Yuma Indians rescued him near the Colorado River and took him to Captain Juan Bautista de Anza's expedition, then encamped with 34 men, 140 horses, and 65 cattle at the presidio of Altar in northern Sonora. Seeking to demonstrate the feasibility of a direct route across the Mojave Desert from Sonora to Monterey, de Anza nursed Tarabal back to health, installed him as the expedition's unofficial guide and interpreter, and on January 8, 1774, followed the wayward farmworker across the Sonoran Desert by a route known as *El Camino del Diablo* (The Devil's Road).

After a month of privation, the company reached the Colorado River and crossed it near its conjunction with the Gila River. Lost and parched on a trek through waterless sand dunes, Tarabal led Anza back from this false start on a journey later recalled as the "Heroic Ten Days." After resting at the Colorado River base, Tarabal struck out again toward the west. Swinging southward around the impassable sand dunes on the western edge of the desert where Tarabal's wife had died, he took the expedition across what is now the Imperial Valley, cutting a diagonal course from near present-day Mexicali to the foot of the San Jacinto Mountains. After finding familiar landmarks near present-day Anza Borrego State Park, he led the expedition to life-saving water holes. On March 10 Anza stopped at a spring in the badlands at the eastern base of the Santa Rosa Mountains, near the forks of the San Felipe Creek and Carizzo Wash (the present-day junction of Highways 78 and 86, at the southwest end of the Salton Sea), naming this last important camp on his first journey across the desert in Tarabal's honor. Called San Sebastian, and later Harper's Well, it is today abandoned.<sup>24</sup>

Continuing on, eleven days later Tarabal led the expedition into the Los Angeles basin, crossing Rio Santa Ana by means of a bridge constructed of boughs, and at sunset on March 22, 1774, entered the gates of Mission San Gabriel. Scholars would later credit Juan Bautista de Anza with blazing the Col-



Route followed by Baja field hand Sebastián Taraval while guiding Padre Francisco Garcés on his famous travels during 1775-1776. Detail from map in *Father Francisco Garcés, A Record of Travels in Arizona and California, 1775-1776* (San Francisco: John Howell Books, 1965), edited and translated by John Galvin.

orado Trail, discovering the route through the Borrego Desert, and linking northern Sonora to Alta California, and Padre Francisco Garcés with acting as the expedition's guide. As reward for these accomplishments Viceroy Bucareli promoted Anza to the rank of lieutenant colonel, missionaries praised Garcés as the greatest and most fearless explorer of the missionary period in the Great Southwest, and state boosters in later centuries subsequently honored and enshrined both by naming highways, colleges, and parks after them. The manner in which this particular journey was recorded and commemorated is illustrative of other forgotten and bitter ironies of California farm labor history, where truth and legend fail to mesh, and field hands are denied their due credit and their proper heritage. For, contrary to popular or even most scholarly accounts, the overland route from Sonora had first been established, and later retraced, not by Anza the great explorer, or Garcés the pathbreaker, but by Sebastián Tarabal, a disaffected, rebellious, Baja field hand, who lost his wife and a companion and nearly his own life escap-

ing from farm work in the fields at Mission San Gabriel.<sup>25</sup>

But that was not the end of the story. Following his return to Mission San Gabriel, Tarabal continued serving as a guide for Garcés. After leading Garcés back to the Colorado River in April 1774, he accompanied him to Tubac, arriving on May 26, and possibly continued farther on to San Miguel de Horcasitas, a small frontier post in Sonora, in all a journey of over four months and two-thousand miles. Whatever his course, Tarabal reappeared at Tubac on October 22, 1775, as a member of Anza's second expedition to California. After crossing the Colorado River with Anza on November 30, Tarabal remained with him until December 4, when he was detailed to assist Garcés on yet another exploration. As Anza headed west, Tarabal guided Garcés along Anza's path. Overtaking Anza in the Colorado Desert near the New River on December 6, they continued west until December 9. Tarabal then served as principal guide for Garcés's conversion efforts among various tribes near the present-day city of Needles.





A family of former mission Indians at San Gabriel Mission, in front of their shelter, ca. 1880. If any were descendants of Baja field hands, their lineage must have by then blended with that of Alta California Indians. Carleton E. Watkins photograph. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*

After that he led Garcés on a cold and perilous winter journey across the Mojave Desert.

Surviving by killing and eating several horses, drinking their blood, and supplementing their diet with tule roots, the runaway field hand brought Garcés into Mission San Gabriel on March 24, 1776, thus breaking a new path from the Colorado Basin to the Spanish settlements almost two years to the day after his first visit. After resting for two weeks, he guided Garcés north into the San Joaquin Valley by way of a route approximating present-day Interstate Highway 5. Pausing along the way, as was Garcés's custom, Tarabal served as interpreter at several Indian baptisms. He remained loyal to Garcés even after two faithful Mojave Indians deserted the leader. But near the vicinity of present-day Greenfield, just south of Bakersfield, even the much-traveled Sebastián Tarabal would go no farther among the unknown tribes. As Garcés proceeded further in the company of an Indian from the Noches tribe, Tarabal set up camp. When Garcés failed to return eight days later, the

ever-loyal Tarabal struck out on his own, searching the mouth of the Kern River before locating and rejoining the padre.<sup>26</sup>

Leaving the southern San Joaquin Valley, Tarabal guided Garcés along a new route, as the padre insisted on going due eastward along a path that is today followed by the railroad, rather than south by way of the trail he had just followed from San Gabriel. Tarabal's role on this phase of the trip was especially important, since Garcés, having lost his compass needle when his horse stumbled in a gopher field south of the Kern River, could no longer rely on the instrument for directions. To overcome that difficulty and get through the mountains, Tarabal questioned local Indians, obtaining enough information to navigate through the crest of the Tehachapi Mountains on May 17. From there he led the expedition across the Mojave Desert, on to the future site of Barstow, and then to the *Rio de los Martires*, the Mojave River, arriving on May 19.<sup>27</sup>

Somewhere in the desert, Tarabal developed what



was apparently a kind of heart ailment, which slowed him down. But he continued on. Serving as interpreter and intermediary between Garcés and a group of Moqui Indians, he guided the party toward Yuma, Arizona. On May 30, in the desert of north-eastern Arizona, he could go no farther. Refusing to venture with Garcés into hostile Indian territory, Tarabal maintained a camp on the Colorado River near Yuma, tending to the mules and waiting while Garcés spent nearly two months preaching among the Juguallapais tribes. Tarabal is last mentioned in Garcés's diary of July 25, 1776. But he apparently continued with Garcés toward Mission San Xavier del Bac (present-day Tucson), possibly arriving there on September 17.

On the march for three years during this second expedition, Tarabal had traveled over three thousand miles entirely by horse or on foot. He remained with Garcés as guide for the next seven years, but his name vanished from the public record after 1781. Whatever his ultimate fate, Sebastián Tarabal's accomplishments and exploits were momentous. Steering Garcés away from hostile natives, leading him to water, caring for his animals, obtaining food from friendly natives, and detouring the expedition around hostile tribes, the intrepid Cochimí field hand remained loyal under conditions so threatening and difficult that they had caused numerous other Indian guides to flee. He was the only native to stay with Garcés throughout all his travels.

Epitomizing the complex role Baja field hands played in the colonization of California and in the exploration of the Spanish frontier, Tarabal is too important to be excluded from the history of the American West, and from the history of California farmworkers as well. Recognizing this, Felipe de Neve, upon becoming commandant-general of the Interior Provinces in 1783, ordered Anza to omit styling himself the discoverer of the route to Alta California on the grounds that the honor belonged to Tarabal. But Felipe de Neve died the following year. Consequently, Anza continued garnering praise. And Sebastián Tarabal—fittingly known as *El Peregrino* ("The Wanderer" or "Pilgrim") and "Saint Sebastián"—had his contributions swept into the dust bin of history.<sup>28</sup>

**T**ough Baja field hands like Sebastián Tarabal traveled north by the hundreds during the mid-1770s. Padres devoted considerable attention to them, and in agreements planning the formation of each new mission, listed them out as important "items" along with supplies of flour, bundles of colored beads, saddles, and other equipment. They were usually distributed five or six families and

five or six boys to each mission. Expected to serve as liaisons with local natives, Baja field hands had to be able to speak several languages, including Spanish, and were also expected to quickly learn the local Indian dialect. Wherever they went, they had to adapt to whatever circumstances confronted them and to accept, uncomplainingly, the most primitive conditions imaginable.<sup>29</sup>

Besides doing stoop labor, establishing fields, training Alta California natives, and doubling as trailblazers, the first generation of Baja field hands brought a number of other important characteristics into the California farmworker experience, some of which are quite surprising. For example, within a decade of their arrival, they had begun growing, tending, and harvesting grapes and making wine. In popular writing, their first viticultural work is often mistakenly located at Mission San Diego and erroneously dated back to 1769. But in fact they did not become involved in grape growing or wine-making until a decade later, probably sometime after May 1779, at Mission San Juan Capistrano. There, early records reveal, Father Pablo de Muñárriz established gardens and grain fields and set six Baja field hands to propagating vine cuttings that had been shipped up from Mexico. In 1781 alone those six field hands planted over 2,000 grapevines. Those men probably first participated in winemaking at Mission San Juan Capistrano during the fall of 1784, possibly even as early as the previous year.<sup>30</sup>

For as long as they worked at the missions, Baja field hands were occupied throughout the year with the tasks of planting grapes, pruning and training them, multiplying cuttings, planting vineyards, harvesting fruit, making wine, and constructing and maintaining the various necessary vats, buildings, presses, and other winemaking facilities. They were also detailed to handle all the attendant duties, such as disposing of vine clippings and pomace (the pulp debris of winemaking). In this way during the 1780s, particularly in the southern missions, Baja field hands established the basis for the modern California wine industry. But ironically, even though the padres drank wine themselves, traded it, served it at Mass, shipped it to their superiors as evidence of their accomplishments, and made a powerful grape-based brew known as *aguardiente*, Baja field hands could not—under penalty of the lash—taste even a drop. So, apparently from the first, Baja field hands were quite literally denied the pleasure of enjoying the fruits of their labors.<sup>31</sup>

Within a few years after establishing winemaking operations at Mission San Juan Capistrano, Baja field hands began to decline as a significant part of the



farm labor force. One reason for this was the expense and difficulty of transporting them north. Hundreds died on those torturous, expensive, and dangerous expeditions up the dry and barren Baja peninsula. For a brief period it seemed that additional field hands would make their way north. They would come from the more prosperous, but distant, missions of Sonora in northern Mexico, and they would follow a new southwestern route that had opened up when Tarabal, Garcés, and Anza crossed the Colorado River near its junction with the Gila River at Yuma. Field hands would be cared for by missionaries and protected by troops sent early in 1781 into the desert about 250 miles northwest of the nearest Spanish garrison, where they planted two small outposts on the California side of the Colorado River: Purísima Concepción, a garrison on a nob in the vicinity of present-day Yuma; and San Pedro y San Pablo de Bicuñer, a village about 10 miles north of present-day Laguna Dam. Briefly, that is the route by which they moved north. That spring, when field hands from the Sonoran missions accompanied a large party of soldiers, colonists, and animals down the Altar Valley to Caborca, and from there across the waterless Camino Diablo to the Yuma crossing and on to Mission Santa Barbara, the Alta California missions seemed to be assured of a new and abundant source of farmworkers. But this was not to be.<sup>32</sup>

Sonoran field hands who came north on the 1781 expedition were the last to make the Yuma crossing. Several months after they passed through, Indians attacked and wiped out both of the Colorado River outposts, killing almost 100 soldiers and padres, including Father Garcés (and possibly Sebastián Tarabal), capturing others, and sparing only the women and children. Following the massacre, Spain abandoned the Yuma crossing, closed the Sonoran trail, and relied entirely on sea routes to resupply the missions. But few field hands ever went north via the sea route, as the fragile transports, struggling to tack against the prevailing winds and currents, were only used for delivering food, tools, artisans, colonists, and Spanish officials. Because of this, after the 1780s imported farmworkers declined dramatically in numbers.<sup>33</sup>

Baja field hands continued to travel north with overland resupply expeditions and aboard ships delivering new missionaries. Single male field hands never married Alta California native women. Childless, they died off, bachelor laborers worn-out by the rigors of the frontier, a plight similar to that of the Filipino ("Pinoy") men who began working in California a century and a half later. Those few hands who did come north with their families never returned home. Remaining on the missions, their

sons became loyal and trusted foremen, and often later intermarried with local native women. Over the years, completely integrated into the mission farm labor force, they lost their ties to Baja California. By the 1820s, newly arrived Baja field hands had become a rare sight indeed, so much so that when Duhaut-Cilly saw one of them at Mission Santa Barbara, he deemed it important enough to record in his journal. That solitary man may have been the last Baja field hand to come north.

Baja field hands did not call themselves *braceros*. At first glance it would seem that they had little in common with those Mexican *campesinos* who traveled north to work in California agriculture 150 years later. Nor apparently did they even know the word or anything like it. They did not work for wages, and therefore could not send money back home as *braceros* did faithfully. Remaining on the frontier, never to return to their families, they did not follow the traditional *bracero* pattern of periodically visiting friends and relatives. Indeed, once venturing north they had no way of knowing what happened to those loved ones they left behind. Yet their similarity to *braceros* of later years, in certain respects, is striking. Their role in averting a farm labor shortage, their long and torturous journey to Alta California, their foreign origins, and the way they were brought north under an elaborate church and government program that defined their status, however minimally, and deployed their labor as it best suited their masters, and used them as models against which the performance of local Indian field hands was measured, conforms in major aspects almost exactly to the experiences of the *bracero* laborers who, to alleviate agricultural labor shortages, were imported from Mexico during the years 1917 to 1920 and again from 1940 to 1964.<sup>34</sup>

Like *braceros*, Baja field hands allowed farmers to work out the best combination of crops and farm sites without having to do farm work themselves. Like *braceros*, they also decreased their master's dependence on local laborers. And they allowed farmers to proceed without having to alter their system of agriculture or their goals. Baja field hands, it seems, became the basis for a government approved, quasi-*bracero* labor program 150 years before the date usually cited for the start of such arrangements. They understood the vagaries of this early farm labor system quite well before they even arrived in Alta California, and they refined many agricultural methods while they were the missions' principal farm hands. This is especially important in understanding the significance of their role and its evolution in the mission system. During their fifteen or twenty years of toil as the principal farmworkers in the mission



Former mission Indians camped near San Diego in temporary quarters while drifting between towns and work, ca. late nineteenth century. By this time, those who might have been descendants of the original Cochimi Indians had had their lineage diluted and confused. *Courtesy Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.*

fields, the Baja workers unknowingly established a pattern, later replicated, modified, and expanded, whereby various private, semi-private, and official government programs would repeatedly overcome labor shortages by importing large numbers of cheap, industrious, "trained," Mexican workers. That imported laborers toiled in California agriculture from the beginning of the mission period reflects a hidden reality of the farmworker story in this region.<sup>35</sup>

KJS

*See notes beginning on page 381*

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# THE OPENING OF THE SIERRA NEVADA AND THE BEGINNINGS OF CONSERVATION IN CALIFORNIA 1827-1900

by David Beesley

## I

In June of 1991 the Sacramento *Bee* proclaimed in banner headlines, supported by color pictures of devastated hillsides, that the Sierra Nevada was in "Peril." This headline marked the beginning of an influential, special investigative series, for which its author, Tom Knudson, received a Pulitzer Prize. In response to the "Sierra in Peril" articles, state, federal, environmental, and resource-oriented groups (not necessarily working or meeting together, and certainly not agreeing on what should be done to address the issues raised by the articles) formulated strategies to respond to what Knudson defined as a tragedy affecting the whole range. Influential as it was, what was missing from Knudson's report was historical perspective. Long before he wrote, in fact almost from the beginning of historical contact with the range, there were voices similar to his that had warned that the Sierra was in danger of destruction.<sup>1</sup>

In 1827 the Sierra Nevada was occupied only by Native Americans. But by 1897, a scant half-century later, the economies and cultures of this indigenous population had been displaced and the people themselves had been nearly exterminated. The range also by then had been explored and mapped, and its resources heavily exploited. This rapid resource development brought radical changes in both the physical structure of the Sierra and the perception of its vulnerability.<sup>2</sup> Accompanying this opening of the Sierra came a change in perception about nature by many Americans. Referred to as either "conservation" or "preservation,"<sup>3</sup> this new perception of nature and the use of natural resources produced a powerful movement after 1890 that led to alteration of previous American land-use practices.<sup>4</sup> The opening of the Sierra Nevada mountain range played a significant role in providing a place to apply the primarily eastern idea of conservation.<sup>5</sup> It also added justification for its implementation because of the negative effects that this opening had produced.

The earliest recorded penetration of the Sierra beyond its western foothills by Euro-Americans

came between 1827 and 1833.<sup>6</sup> From these beginnings, when Mexico still governed California, arose an increased overland migration from the United States between 1840 and 1848.<sup>7</sup> The discovery of gold initiated a massive migration from around the world into the Sierra that in turn shaped its early development phase.<sup>8</sup> Within a short time the effects of this development began to raise concern for the range's well being.

Three contemporary perspectives concerning the Sierra Nevada emerged between 1827 and 1900 and influenced human contact with the range. Emigration through the Sierra Nevada to California after the late 1820s first generated the image of the range as a frightening barrier to be overcome as quickly as possible in order to reach California. Later, a return immigration to the Sierra brought a new perspective. The chance discovery of gold in 1848 created the image of the Sierra as a vast treasure house of resources to exploit, which facilitated massive physical changes because of developments in mining, lumbering, grazing, water use, transportation, scientific activity, recreation, hunting, and urbanization. At the end of the period under discussion, a growing concern about many of these activities, including their influences on the adjoining areas in the California Central Valley and Nevada, led to demands for protection of the Sierra.

Although California environmentalist and Sierra Club activist Francis Farquhar has written an early history of the Sierra,<sup>9</sup> and several studies of aspects of Sierran environmental history have been written,<sup>10</sup> there is as yet no environmental history of the Sierra as a whole. This study of the opening of the Sierra is intended to begin the process of creating that history.

## II

The Sierra Nevada is the longest unbroken mountain range in North America. Unlike the Appalachians, the Rockies, and the Cascades, the Sierra was created in such a way that no major break occurs in its more than 400-mile length. Its heights are impres-



View west from Kearsarge Pass, with Mt. Brewer in the center, June 29, 1900. When first encountered by early European colonists and travelers from the eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth century, the Sierra Nevada, with its many sheer, north-south cliffs, loomed as a great barrier, particularly to travel from the east. By the time of this remarkable photograph, however, the Sierra had assumed a new meaning as a treasure house of valuable resources and recreational uses. Photo by Joseph N. LeConte; printed from the original negative by Ansel Adams. *Sierra Club Pictorial Collection, Bancroft Library.*

sive, ranging from about 9,000 feet in its northern end, to over 14,000 at its southern extremity. It varies from fifty to seventy miles wide, depending on whether or not its western foothills are included. Looked at from California's Central Valley, the approach from the west seems gradual. Viewed from the eastern side, however, the Sierra presents a different picture. The geologic forces that shaped the range produced a gigantic fracture on its eastern side, which pushed up a block of rock creating a sharp, distinctive escarpment. This wall blocked easy entrance or crossing from the Great Basin, or eastern, side. It is especially this feature that shaped the first image of the Sierra for explorers and emigrants from the United States.<sup>11</sup>

Although most later emigrants to California came overland and crossed the Sierra from its eastern side, the first recorded crossing was from the west by the fur trapper Jedediah S. Smith. His attempt to return

to the United States by way of the Stanislaus River system was marked by near disaster when a blizzard struck his party in May 1827. Fearing "destruction," he said he would never forget the hardships of that storm and that they would be "forever engraved" on his mind. Similar statements were made in 1833 by the adventurer Zenas Leonard, who was the diarist marking the first crossing of the Sierra from the east, also in winter conditions. He noted freezing cold and near starvation, which forced the party to eat some of their horses. Regardless of the direction taken by these early parties of men, who were used to wilderness and its dangers, the consensus was that the crossing was either daunting, difficult, or potentially deadly.<sup>12</sup>

Emigration to California through the Sierra Nevada by families and groups of men began in earnest in 1841. Difficulties on the crossing were commonly dwelt upon by travelers for some time to



come. Knowledge of how to get through was limited, and would remain so until the 1850s. The information that did come their way was anecdotal at first. It might have included limited direct guidance from hired mountain men; it might have been based on an official government report by John C. Frémont about the Carson River route; or it might have come from published guide books, one of which was written by Lansford W. Hastings. It was taking his bad advice that spelled the doom of the infamous Donner-Reed group in the winter of 1846-1847. Whatever migrants read or heard, spanning the distances from Missouri was deemed to be arduous, and crossing the Sierra was seen as dreadful.<sup>13</sup>

Between 1841 and 1844, only a few parties crossed the Sierra from the United States, and they did not take wagons. In 1844, the Stevens-Townsend party managed to get through with wagons, even though snow made its crossing of the Sierra difficult. Other parties, some aided by experienced mountain men as guides, found ways other than the Truckee River route to cross the Sierra in 1845. Then, in the following fall and winter of 1846-1847, the Donner-Reed disaster occurred. Of the eighty-two who reached Donner Lake, thirty-seven died, and the terrible image of cannibalism was added to the fears that the mountain crossing engendered. While later parties would not suffer such a calamity, the fear that early snow and bad luck could produce a similar result hounded overland travelers. The discovery of gold lured many to attempt the crossing into the early 1850s, but most of the accounts still portrayed the Sierra as a barrier to be rushed over, indeed to be avoided if possible.<sup>14</sup>

This image of the Sierra found its way into most accounts of those who attempted to cross. Franklin Langworthy, who chose to follow the Carson route, noted that after a rough, two-mile, uphill climb, he had reached the point "which is the most dreaded by emigrants of any upon the entire land route to California." Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly, who were crossing on the Truckee River route in 1849, wrote in their journal of the "*Great Bugaboo*, that which has caused many a sleepless night, with disturbed dreams to the discouraged emigrant, *The Sierra Nevada Mountains*." These latter diarists noted a visit to Donner Lake, the scene of the "lamentable Donner Party," where they found animal and human bones, one nearly whole human skeleton, and trees cut at the height of ten feet—the depth of the snow in the winter of 1846. While there, they met one of the surviving children of W. F. Graves, a member of the Donner group, but noted that the child would not talk about the event.<sup>15</sup>

While most individuals or parties who crossed the Sierra Nevada did not directly encounter reminders

of the Donner incident, they did share the hardships and concerns at crossing the range. Wakeman and Bryarly had it somewhat easier because they were not taking wagons, but many other first-hand accounts record the experience of having loved ones die, seeing wrecked wagons, viewing dead or starving animals, and encountering graves that had been recently dug for those who had died of disease, accidents, or drowning in either the Truckee or Carson rivers. Overland travelers also shared fears of Indians, aching homesickness, and anxiety at getting lost or becoming stranded by snow. As late as 1852, rescue parties still had to be organized in California to aid late-arriving immigrants.<sup>16</sup>

Fear of the mountain barrier was often mentioned in accounts of the crossing. What also appeared in these journals was much more practical, however, and reflected the hard work and bone-wearying labor needed to move wagons up river canyons, over rocky outcrops, and down steep hillsides.<sup>17</sup> It was often necessary to unload wagons, haul them over steep places, load them again, ford and re-ford the Truckee or Carson rivers, feed tired and hungry animals with limited supplies of local wild grasses, and deal with the odd and not always helpful assortment of individuals who comprised the parties.<sup>18</sup> A comment of one diarist, Dr. John H. Wayman, who was anxious to get over the Sierra but was frustrated at the delays of his group, recorded a view of his crossing of the mountain range that makes it hard to romanticize the pioneer experience. As he stated: "Shit, Hell and Granny with a cock and ballocks Damnation and Hellfier Camphire Fox Fier and all else that is mean, low and shitting. May the Good Lord ever deliver me from such Asses for all coming time, and I will thank him kindly, and return the compliment the first practical opportunity."<sup>19</sup>

As illustrated, most of the accounts of those who crossed the Sierra into California before 1859 overwhelmingly concentrated on its hardships and fearful aspects. To these emigrants, the Sierra Nevada was a barrier to the entrance to California or to its western foothills, where the gold diggings were located. But there were also a few views recorded of its beauty and the good timber that covered its slopes. This perspective of the Sierra as a treasure trove of resources that would shape the dominant view of the Sierra in the next phase of its opening, resulted in massive physical changes.<sup>20</sup>

### III

The discovery of gold in 1848 caused the most profound alteration of attitudes about, and the physical structure of, the Sierra Nevada in its history to that point.<sup>21</sup> While difficulties in its crossing would continue until about 1860, the gold discovery pro-



Hydraulic mining created massive effects on Sierran landscapes as well as valley farming interests. Federal court action stopped large-scale development in 1884. Other forms of mining, including placer, quartz, and dredge mining, also heavily damaged landscapes and biological communities, particularly along water courses. Ill effects of nineteenth-century mining can still be seen over much of the Sierra in the late twentieth century. *Courtesy, Nevada County Historical Society.*

moted a return migration into the mountains that generated development. This stimulated mining, lumbering, grazing, market-hunting, urbanization, roads, railroads, tourism, and water exploitation that transformed the Sierra.

Although it could be argued that the first industrial use of Sierran resources—John Sutter's sawmill under construction in early 1848—was focused on lumber, the first sawmill at Coloma is chiefly remembered for the discovery of gold and its stimulus to the Gold Rush. According to J. S. Holliday, because of Sierran gold, the "World Rushed In" to California.<sup>22</sup> Using a similar image, Rodman Paul said that mining in the Sierra generated a "Great Migration."<sup>23</sup>

Focusing on mining as an economic activity, Paul described three clear periods that represent its transition from an adventure to a mature industry in the years from 1848 to 1873. The first of these, 1848 to 1851, led to exploitation of deposits of placer gold

by amateurs. Abundant gold required few skills and no complex technology. Once these easy surface or stream deposits were picked over, another phase began. Between 1851 and 1859, the harder tasks of exploiting river- and streambeds, veins of gold embedded in quartz, and deposits of alluvial gravel were faced. These new sources required capital, new techniques, machinery, and large and reliable supplies of water, wood, and other resources. The early adventure had become a business. The third period, 1860 to 1873, saw a maturing of the business into a capital-intensive industry employing wage-earning miners, chiefly in the deep mines and in gigantic hydraulic operations.<sup>24</sup>

While mining is an industry in itself, in the Sierra it was intimately connected to the development of lumber and water sources, and thus mining promoted the development of satellite camps and towns to supply the needs of the primary resource devel-



opers. Water, in increasingly large and predictable amounts, was absolutely necessary to process placer gold. Not only was firewood the principal source of energy, lumber was required to transport water in wooden flumes, support excavations, and to shore up tunnels. It was also needed to construct shelters for living and in which to conduct business and other activities. Camps and towns were often consumed by fires, requiring the further cutting of locally available timber. Contemporary sketches or photographs of mining camps and towns present stark reminders of the denudation of Sierran foothill forest environments that resulted.<sup>25</sup>

Placer mining in the Sierra itself produced significant environmental changes. The most obvious to observers was large-scale erosion, causing mud and sand to clog the once-clear streams. Hillsides were also pock-marked with holes. Channels and tunnels were cut to divert water so that streambeds could be searched for gold. Flumes were constructed to divert water from streambeds, necessitating the cutting of

adjoining forests. Sometimes flumes leaked or burst, causing erosion gullies to develop. Dams created to store water could also burst, generating great surges of flood water that carried mud, stones, and logs on their crests.<sup>26</sup>

The development of large-scale hydraulic mining had a particularly profound effect on the Sierran environment. Originally, hydraulic mining, which involved the focusing of water flow under high pressure through canvas hoses, was seen as a cheap method to wash surface gravels. Some success with this activity led to technological improvements. Eventually, water gathered from high mountain sources, transported through flumes and ditches, and forced by the power of gravity under even greater pressure through iron nozzles, called monitors, was directed against Sierran hillsides. The resulting mud and debris washed loose was channeled into long sluices, where much of the freed gold was collected.<sup>27</sup> Hydraulic mining occurred in many areas of the Sierra Nevada foothills, but most of the mining com-



A small Sierran lumber mill typical of operations in the northern and central Sierra. Oxen commonly dragged logs to the mill. Lumber crews and oxen had to be fed, leading to development of agriculture in many sites. Tens of thousands of acres of northern Sierra forests were cut down during and after the 1860s to provide lumber and fuel for the Central Pacific Railroad and Comstock Lode silver mines of western Nevada. *Courtesy Nevada County Historical Society.*

panies were located in the northern Sierra, where there were larger water supplies. They utilized the drainages of the Feather, American, Bear, and Yuba rivers. The center of the industry was located on the Yuba, where the largest and most complex operations developed.<sup>28</sup>

The effect of the sand, gravel, and rock dislodged by hydraulic mining on the Sierran foothills was profound. First, small streams became clogged. Next, the larger mining operations cut drainage channels so that the resulting debris could be diverted into the larger river canyons. According to a report published by the State Engineer to the California legislature in 1880, over 680 million cubic yards of debris had been washed into the Yuba, Feather, American, and Bear systems by hydraulic operations.<sup>29</sup> William H. Brewer of the California Geological Survey commented early in the 1860s on the "immense" hydraulic operations he observed on the Yuba at North San Juan and Camptonville.<sup>30</sup> This collection of sand and gravel filled in riverbeds, reduced their drainage capacities and produced floods in the Sacramento Valley that deposited the debris on the lands of the farming communities fringing the Sierra foothills. Conflict between miners and downriver farmers and town dwellers ensued, particularly in the 1870s and 1880s, as illustrated in one letter written in 1882 by a discouraged miner who complained to his family that lawsuits brought by affected farmers against the mining companies were forcing some operations to shut down temporarily.<sup>31</sup>

During the early development phase, logging operations in the conifer forests of the Sierra Nevada created changes comparable to mining in their effects. Logging developed in support of local mining activities, but also to provide material for the building of camps and towns in both the mountains and the Central Valley and to produce the ties, timbers, and planking necessary to build the Central Pacific and other early Sierran railroads. Lumber mills generated the millions of board-feet of timbers and cord wood needed to operate the deep mines and smelters of the Comstock Lode in nearby Nevada. Unfortunately for the giant sequoia of the west-central Sierra, demand for fence posts and the sheer novelty of felling the trees or stripping the bark from them, led to their being logged as well.<sup>32</sup>

Figures in millions of board-feet of timber cut in Sierran forests are common in all contemporary accounts of the industry. Descriptions of numerous mills, ranging from small to very large, are proudly reported in the early subscription histories of the Sierra Nevada counties. There are, however, no accurate overall totals of the lumber cut in the Sierra counties, or the number of mills operating in the period under discussion. One state report published in 1886

estimated that twenty years of cutting had "consumed and destroyed" one-third of the Sierra's timber, and that at the same rate of consumption, all would soon be gone.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps by using one detailed study of timber cutting in the Tahoe-Donner Basin, however, some idea of the immensity of the impact can be gained. According to Constance Darrow Knowles in a report prepared with the sponsorship of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1942, all old-growth timber in the basin had been cut by 1936. Most of the cutting occurred in the period between 1856 and 1880, beginning on the eastern side of the Sierra in the vicinity of the Comstock Lode, then moving into the Tahoe Basin, and then down the Truckee River corridor between Lake Tahoe and Reno. The markets for this timber included the Comstock, the Central Pacific, and the Virginia & Truckee railroads, and cities in the Great Basin. Much of the lumber was utilized to build "V" flumes to get the lumber to market.<sup>34</sup>

Knowles noted that the Central Pacific, which constructed its line through the Sierra between 1863 and 1869, used 300-million board-feet from the Tahoe-Truckee Basin just to build snow sheds and other railroad facilities. It also consumed 20-million board-feet annually to maintain its operation. After a short period of decline, the revival of the Comstock mines in the early 1870s led to utilization of an additional 70-million board-feet a year until they reduced operations at the end of the decade. Knowles also stated that in the time from 1867 to 1877 an estimated 376-million board-feet were cut for Great Basin markets. Cord wood cut to feed the steam engines of the Central Pacific and the pumps that controlled water in the deep Comstock mines totaled over 1,162,000 cords.<sup>35</sup> John Muir traveled up the Truckee River and over to Tahoe in 1888 and commented on the effects of this activity. For all his optimism about eventual renewal of the forest, he reported that the ground was littered with the remains of "fallen burnt logs or tops of trees felled for lumber" and that the "best timber" had been cut.<sup>36</sup>

The Sierran forests were also reduced by fire and wasteful logging practices common to the industry at that time. Many fires were set deliberately by sheepherders to create more open grasslands for their flocks. Railroads were also significant contributors to fire destruction because of sparks coming from locomotives and wheels of the cars. But contemporaries singled out the herders as the most significant cause of Sierran fires. Other fires often resulted from careless actions by lumber speculators. Mark Twain, in his *Roughing It*, gives an account of how a careless campfire on his timber claim near Tahoe burned up all his assets.<sup>37</sup> In the cutting of trees, much was





"Steam donkeys" such as this one pulled cut logs to milling sites. The dragging of logs damaged soil, watercourses, and young trees, contributing to erosion and slow forest regeneration in many Sierran sites. *Courtesy Nevada County Historical Society.*

wasted by leaving stumps of significant height for the reason of convenience. Logs were frequently cut at the point where the limbs began, leaving the rest behind to add to available fuel should fires start. Built to transport cut timber, "V" flumes consumed 135-thousand board-feet per mile, and steam engines called "steam donkeys" tore up the woods as they dragged the logs to chutes or loading pads. Circular saws at the mills reduced much of the logs into sawdust, which was often disposed of by dumping into nearby rivers, affecting fisheries and downstream water quality.<sup>38</sup>

Changes in the Sierra that began in the post-gold-discovery period were due in part to improved transportation. Surveys were made to discover feasible wagon routes across the mountains. The first commercial attempt to find an easy route for gold seekers was that of the mountain man Jim Beckwourth. He had been hired by Marysville, California, merchants to look for a route that would channel immigrants their way. His pass proved to be easy, but otherwise brought him no profit.<sup>39</sup> Numerous attempts to establish wagon roads were made by county governments eager to draw travelers in their direction. The state of California eventually succeeded in pushing through an improved road over the old Carson Pass route in 1858.<sup>40</sup>

Surveys were also made to discover a feasible

route for a transcontinental railroad between 1853 and 1855. Because of the influence of southern states in the Congress and the desire of railroad promoters to avoid snow, much of the focus was away from northerly routes. Some attempts were made to discover a route in the northern Sierra, however, notably those aimed at exploring Noble's and Madeline's passes. None of the Sierran regions surveyed under federal direction yielded a route that surmounted the problem of the Sierra's steepness. Later, however, privately funded surveys by engineer and railway promoter Theodore Judah in the late 1850s and early 1860s found the route that eventually would be taken by the Central Pacific.<sup>41</sup>

Two scientific surveys conducted in part in the Sierra added to further knowledge about the range. The most important of these was the California Geological Survey, begun in 1860 under the direction of Josiah D. Whitney. Intended by Whitney to be a complete scientific survey of the state of California, it was thwarted and ultimately underfunded through the California legislature's impatience and greed. Uninterested in scientific advancements, legislators wanted more complete information on such practical matters as location of new minerals to exploit. As Michael L. Smith points out, Whitney was not anti-development, but wanted scientific standards and rational direction to guide the state's resource poli-



Hobart Mills, ten miles north of Truckee along a narrow-gauge rail line that connected to the Central Pacific, was typical of the large-scale railroad-encouraged lumber operations in the northern and central Sierra Nevada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. *Courtesy Nevada County Historical Society.*

cies. The Sierra Nevada was surveyed by Whitney's team, which included William Brewer, William Ashburner, and Clarence King, primarily between 1863 and 1865. The survey report made the Sierra better known. Publication of a guidebook to Yosemite by Whitney later added to this knowledge, and it was used by tourists for many years to come.<sup>42</sup>

A minor survey in the Sierra Nevada was that to determine the boundary between Nevada and California. As with Whitney's survey, it was also corrupted by practical demands. Three distinct interests came into conflict: the federal government in the form of the General Land Office; the economic interests of Nevada politicians, agriculturists, and timber developers; and similar California interests. The boundary between Nevada and California was in dispute because the two separate pieces of congressional legislation creating these political entities conflicted. At stake was control over valuable timber land, grazing resources, and water.<sup>43</sup>

Both states came to regret the hiring of surveyor Alexey Von Schmidt by the federal government to conduct the survey in 1871–1872. Involved in various partnerships and schemes to ship water from Lake Tahoe to San Francisco between the 1850s and

1900, Von Schmidt also had personal aggrandizement in mind. He also built a dam on the rim of Lake Tahoe, where the Truckee River flowed out of the lake on its way east into the Great Basin. Dissatisfaction with Von Schmidt's competence and conflicts of interest caused the rejection of his map, resulting in the need for other surveys.<sup>44</sup>

Another focus of development-minded interest for immigrants to the Sierra after 1850 was its meadows and other grasslands. Most of the grazing activity was seasonal, and it included cattle, sheep, and goats. As California's annual summer drought advanced, cattle, raised for meat as well as for dairy purposes, were driven from low-lying valley or foothill areas into the Sierra to take advantage of the lush grass at cooler, well-watered, higher elevations. Markets in the form of railroad workers, lumberjacks, and Comstock miners also existed for the meat, milk, butter, and cheese that was produced. Some observers—including John Muir, who railed at natural "gardens" being converted to beef pastures—noted evidence of severe damage to meadows as a result of such activity.<sup>45</sup>

Contemporaries singled out sheep as more destructive than cattle. John Muir is the person who most



memorably described sheep as "hoofed locusts," maintaining also that they were as effective as fires or glaciers in destroying foliage. The sheep-raising industry in the Sierra went through two distinct phases before 1900. During the first, these animals were driven from New Mexico and southern California to mining camps and towns in the heyday of placer mining. The second phase, after 1860, more directly involved Sierran pastures. Itinerant, or "gypsy," sheep bands were driven into both sides of the Sierra from southern and central California because drought conditions and competition for land made free range in the mountains desirable.<sup>46</sup> In the late 1860s, Muir himself had worked as a shepherd for one of these grazing enterprises.

Contemporary observers noted two factors contributing to negative effects of sheep-grazing in Sierra Nevada meadow systems. First came complaints at the sheer numbers concentrated in various areas. This practice led to overgrazing. Joseph Le Conte noted some 12,000 to 15,000 head pastured in Tuolumne Meadows in the summer of 1872,<sup>47</sup> and

the compiler of W. F. Edwards' *Tourists' Guide and Directory of the Truckee Basin* noted that 75,000 to 100,000 sheep were annually pastured in that watershed.<sup>48</sup> One California county, Inyo, had tax records for 1896–1897 that listed thirty-four sheep licenses being granted for use from April 30 to June 15, covering nearly 99,000 sheep, most of which would find their way into the Sierra. A description of damage caused by overgrazing contained in the *First Biennial Report of the California State Board of Forestry for the Years 1885–1886* deserves to be quoted at length. According to Luther Wagoner: "The high Sierra is composed of rocky soil, generally quite thin and easily dislodged. The sheep make numerous nearly horizontal trails, and dislodge the soil and humus, and kill young trees by trampling and dislodging soil. I think there is no doubt that the damage done by sheep is greater than their value, and if they could be shut out entirely the State would be the gainer by doing so."<sup>49</sup>

The second major effect of sheep-grazing caused the greatest damage to the Sierra. This resulted from



By the end of the nineteenth century, overgrazing and travel by cattle, horses, and especially sheep had caused massive destruction of Sierran meadows and forests. Despite some controls instituted by the turn of the century, damage continued to be evident, even as late as this 1949 photograph of domestic animal trails at Sequoia National Park. Photo by Lowell Sumner. Courtesy Sequoia National Park Archives.



Passengers disembarking from a steamer at Lake Tahoe. By the late 1800s, with the forest largely stripped from the Lake Tahoe basin and other Sierra areas, tourism was overtaking lumbering as the most important regional industry. *Courtesy Nevada County Historical Society.*



fires set by sheep-men. They did this to clear areas of trees and undergrowth so that grass would replace such vegetation for grazing in later years. Luther Wagoner noted these activities in his report cited earlier.<sup>50</sup> John Muir claimed that "muttonneers," as he called herders, were the cause of ninety percent of all fires in Sierran forests.<sup>51</sup>

Sierran miners, loggers, and camp and city residents needed to be fed. As with other elements of the environment, wildlife of certain kinds ended up as "resources" to be utilized, particularly during the chronic shortage of standard foods in early pioneer days. William Brewer, while working on the California Geological Survey, for example, reported buying venison from a market hunter in 1864.<sup>52</sup> While deer were heavily hunted for market, they tended to survive due to their adaptability. This was not generally true for the pronghorn of the eastern Sierra, the big horn sheep of higher Sierran elevations, or the grizzly bear.<sup>53</sup>

The grizzly bear, which favored low-elevation haunts, such as the western foothills, was particularly a target of exploitation and extermination by those who were living or working in the Sierra before 1890. These large, potentially dangerous animals were dealt with in many ways. Humans killed

grizzly for self-protection or to protect their livestock. The bears were also captured to be exhibited or to be pitted against bulls in commercially produced fights. They were also hunted for flesh, oil, and hide for use as rugs or blankets. In 1876, the California legislature established a bounty for killing grizzly bears in a limited number of counties, although it was repealed the next year because the animal population, facing dramatic decline, was no longer perceived to be a danger.<sup>54</sup>

As the period of unrestricted Sierra resource exploitation advanced, tourism eventually joined grazing, mining, and forestry as another development interest. Even while rushing to get over the Sierra barrier, many emigrants had noted its spectacular beauty and lovely lakes. In a similar vein, some members of the so-called Mariposa Battalion, fearfully searching for Miwok Indians, were awe-struck when they "discovered" Yosemite Valley in 1851. As mining and timber development created camps, towns, roads, and soon, resorts, tourism as an industry began to grow. Most of the focus for this early tourism was on the lakes of the northern Sierra, including Tahoe, Donner, Weber, and Independence. Yosemite, first developed by private interests before becoming a state reserve, and the Big Trees upslope from Mariposa



both created interest in the central Sierra. The completion of the Central Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads made access to these features relatively easy for comfort-minded easterners and Europeans. With railroads widely advertizing the Sierra's glories in order to build passenger traffic, this transition from barrier to tourist Mecca was remarkably swift.<sup>55</sup>

Tahoe, the Big Trees, and Yosemite were drawing the attention of some of America's more significant writers even before the railroad made contact easy. In the early 1860s, Mark Twain was lured from his residence in Virginia City, Nevada, by accounts of Tahoe's beauty as much as by his plans to get rich by becoming a timber speculator. He was suitably impressed by it, especially its setting, ringed by spectacular mountains. He advanced a claim that "three months of camp life on Tahoe would restore an Egyptian mummy to his pristine vigor."<sup>56</sup>

Eastern newspaper editor Horace Greeley, who had visited Yosemite in 1859, denounced Yosemite Falls, which he saw late in a dry summer, as a humbug, but he did admit of the valley itself, that "no single wonder on earth" could be compared to it. He voiced similar praise for the size and age of the Big Trees near Mariposa. Even as he marveled at their singular grandeur, he also advanced concern that something must be done immediately by the state of California to protect them from fire damage.<sup>57</sup> Greeley was among the first of many who voiced concern for the damaging effect of human activities at Tahoe and Yosemite, and to the sequoias.

Concern about private development in Yosemite Valley by such entrepreneurs as James M. Hutchings prompted a number of prominent Californians to appeal to the federal government to set the valley aside for public use. In 1864 Congress did just that, transferring the valley and the Mariposa sequoia grove to the custody of California as the nation's first wilderness preserve. But if the intent had been to protect the valley from the type of desecration and commercialization that had befallen Niagara Falls in the east, it was not completely accomplished. Under the generally lax state administration, commercial development by concessionaires led to building of shoddy lodgings for tourists, erection of commercial signs on the way to and in the valley, cutting of trees to improve views, fencing of the meadows for grazing of livestock, planting of orchards to provide fruit for tourists, construction of ladders to reach Vernal Falls more easily, and establishment of commercial ferries and bridges to aid stream crossings. Perhaps the single worst example of this commercial alteration of the valley occurred when a side cataract of Nevada Falls was cut off to force more water into a central channel so that tourists could see the waterfall in the summer.<sup>58</sup>

According to John Muir, who had once himself been hired by Hutchings to operate a sawmill in the valley, Yosemite Valley was rapidly being destroyed. As he said in 1874, "the plow is busy among its gardens, the axe among its groves, and the whole valley wears a weary, dusty aspect, as if it were a traveler new arrived from a wasting journey. Lovers of clean mountain wilderness must therefore go higher, into more inaccessible retreats among the summits of the range."<sup>59</sup> While Muir was specifically referring to the valley, the same judgement could be made about many areas in the Sierra.

#### IV

By the 1880s much of the Sierra Nevada had been affected by resource exploitation and urbanization. Some observers said that mountain ecosystems were in danger of being destroyed, and a few, including Muir, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century warned of the impact of destruction on the region's broader environment. Not all of the changes would be lamented by contemporaries, however. Most, for example, would not regret the near extermination of the Sierra's greatest predator, the grizzly bear.<sup>60</sup> As has been noted, however, wholesale development in other cases had raised concerns from a minority of observers from the beginning. Much of this negative attention centered on the effects of hydraulic mining, overdevelopment of Yosemite Valley, the cutting or burning of the giant sequoia and other trees in the southern Sierra, and on the effects of deforestation in Sierran forests and drainages in general, including the potential destruction of watersheds and water resources for future irrigation. These concerns, and the actions taken concerning them, represent the beginning of a new attitude toward the Sierra, and the beginning of conservation as a movement.

The effects of hydraulic mining by the 1880s included disastrous floods in the Sierra foothills and in the Sacramento Valley caused when streams became clogged with mining debris. The activities of the miners eventually led to state legislation to try to control the flooding that arose from their activities. This failed because the costs of regulation were imposed on all California citizens. Some counties or individuals not directly affected refused to bear the burden of taxes intended to benefit valley farmers alone, and soon appropriations for control were discontinued. Then the courts were tried, eventually leading to a federal court order in 1884 placing an injunction prohibiting the depositing of any runoff debris in the streams of the Sierra. By the 1890s, federal legislation backed away from this extreme federal court action, which had effectively stopped all hydraulic mining, and instead allowed limited operations that would not injure the valley farmers. In

reality, though, large-scale hydraulic mining came to an end.<sup>61</sup>

Another concern expressed by nineteenth-century observers was for the over-development of Yosemite Valley, which had been placed into the custody of the state of California after the passage of the federal law in 1864. Private claims in the valley, and negative effects that resulted from actions taken by concessionaires and services, produced many complaints. Park commissioners appointed by the state were criticized from all sides for their actions or lack of action. One visitor in the 1870s spoke favorably of the attempt to save the valley from private spoilage, but had her doubts. Sara Jane Lippincott said that state control "may be a comedy after all,—horse-railroads and trotting tracks, hacks and hand organs, Saratoga trunks and croquet parties, elevators running up the face of El Capitan, the Domes plastered with circus bills and advertisements of 'Plantation Bitters'." The state went to court and eventually secured the removal of private holdings, and fees for private ferries and trails within the park were removed. Problems of over-development continued, however. Through the actions of private individuals, including John Muir and Robert Underwood Johnson, and with the help of the Southern Pacific Railroad and politicians such as Theodore Roosevelt, in 1906 the valley was returned to federal control for inclusion in the surrounding Yosemite National Park, which Congress had created in 1890.<sup>62</sup>

Long before serious action was taken to federalize Yosemite Valley, interest in the protection of the high country and the drainage systems above it had been expressed. A complex group of interests formed to create effective protection. It included farmers concerned about preserving watersheds, civic groups from communities in the nearby valley wanting tourism and watershed protection, the Southern Pacific Railroad interested in tourism, and individuals, such as John Muir, desiring wilderness preservation in general. Added to this complex of interests, was the state's Yosemite Commission itself. Congressional legislation was introduced to create Yosemite National Park in 1890. Later that year, with new pressure from a representative of the Southern Pacific, legislation establishing the park was passed and signed by President Harrison.<sup>63</sup>

This same perceived set of problems—the destructive actions of miners, grazers, and lumbermen—generated pressure to protect the sequoia and other trees of the southern Sierra. Mining activity in this part of the range was least destructive, because the area was limited in its mining resources. The effects of grazing, including the fires set by cattle- or sheepmen were also less serious than in the central and northern parts of the range. The greatest damage here

resulted from timber operations. Not only were pine forests under assault, the cutting of giant sequoias for exhibition and utilitarian uses raised concern. By the mid-1880s the attempt of a utopian cooperative society, the Kaweah Colony, to lay claim to an extensive portion of the southern Sierra forest for logging, stimulated a movement to provide protection. San Joaquin Valley agriculturalists, newspaper editors, local civic groups, and environmentalists such as John Muir combined their activities to bring pressure to bear on Congress to secure passage of legislation to create Sequoia National Park in 1890.<sup>64</sup>

Much of the remaining southern Sierra was not protected, however. Fearing that federal control was coming, timber interests intensified their cutting. In 1891, pressure from California agriculturalists, representatives in Congress, and national interests, which included scientists and professional foresters, forced Congress to pass legislation allowing the president to designate forest reserves by withdrawing land from development. In 1893, President Harrison created the giant Sierra Forest Reserve covering the southern Sierra area. It was not until 1897 that any management plan was created, however, and not until after the turn of the century that the U.S. Forest Service was created to implement it.<sup>65</sup>

Besides the specific cases examined above, other problems were developing that involved deforestation and its effects in a broader Sierran perspective. A combination of interests, including the governments of Nevada and California, private citizens in both states, and the federal government, pressed for action intended to halt the abuses of unrestricted lumbering. Three examples of this broader concern were the interrelated attempts to create protected parkland around Lake Tahoe, to stop the dumping of sawdust into the Truckee River drainage, and to create a California State Board of Forestry to control the destructive actions of grazers and lumber interests in California's forests.

As early as 1850, the California legislature began actions to control forest fires and to map forest lands. By 1862, Governor Leland Stanford was calling for state control of forests to prevent wasteful development and theft of valuable timber. A California State Board of Agriculture report of 1868–69 claimed that in the most desired forest land in the Coast Range and in the Sierra, one-third had been cut over or destroyed in twenty years of development. At the same rate of cutting, the report estimated that in forty years the state would have no forests. By 1872 the legislature drafted legislation to create the office of State Forester and a State Forestry Commission. Although it did not pass, the proposed legislation reflected the growing concern over management of lands. Finally in 1883, the state did act by creating a



study group specifically to address the problems of over-cutting in the Tahoe Basin. It was named the Lake Bigler Forestry Commission, after Tahoe's first "official" name, still in use at the time.<sup>66</sup>

At the same time that the state of California was showing interest in protecting its forests, national concern over wasteful forest practices and over-cutting had developed and was influencing the thinking of Californians. Between 1865 and 1868, books such as Frederick Starr's *American Forests* and George Perkins Marsh's *Man and Nature* were published. In 1873, the American Association for the Advancement of Science issued a report on forest preservation authored by Franklin B. Hough, and in 1875 the American Forestry Association was founded. The members of the Lake Bigler Forestry Commission were familiar with the ideas generated by these books and groups.<sup>67</sup>

The resolution that led to the creation of the Lake Bigler Forestry Commission gave as a reason for its creation the need to protect the lake and the land around it for the use of tourists, as well as to control the lumber activities that were rapidly denuding its steep shore. The report from the three-man commission included a demand for the creation of a state park or state forest around the lake. It was to be created by an exchange of state, federal, and private land, placing the lake shore under the control of the state of California. The report also called for California to create a state forestry commission. As it stated, "the preservation of this lovely gem in California's coronet is urged, first as a fitting beginning in the direction of forestry legislation; second, because it is the duty of the State to keep for its people's enjoyment this perfect resort; and third, because such an attraction as Lake Bigler brings thousands of desirable visitors within the state to the state's profit and renown."<sup>68</sup> Unfortunately, political objections to the land transfers, which would have brought profit to the unpopular Central Pacific Railroad, prevented this action to protect the lake.<sup>69</sup>

A second major concern regarding wasteful forest practices had to do with a by-product of the intensive logging activities. As a result of lumbering in the Truckee-Tahoe Basin, sawdust was generated in great quantities. The disposal of sawdust by dumping it into the streams of the Truckee drainage, favored by the lumbermen as the cheapest way to eliminate this bothersome substance, fouled streams, threatened downstream water supplies, and destroyed fisheries. Since the Truckee River flowed out of California's shore of Lake Tahoe and east into the state of Nevada before terminating in Pyramid Lake, resolution of the sawdust controversy was complicated. The legislatures of Nevada and California, the lumber interests in the Truckee Basin and their local supporters, the

residents of Reno, and Paiute Indian fishermen who were involved in commercial fishing, especially at Pyramid Lake, all disagreed about what should be done, or even if there was a problem. Finally, the California and Nevada legislatures agreed jointly in 1889 to prohibit dumping, and most dumping stopped. In 1894 the California Fish Commission applied pressure on the remaining lumber operations still dumping, and secured the end of the practice.<sup>70</sup>

Because of overall concern about depredations on California's forested land, of which the Sierra provided the most vivid example, public-spirited conservationists and valley irrigation interests combined to press the legislature to create the State Board of Forestry in 1885. Suggested first in 1869 and supported in the Lake Bigler Commission report, the new state agency was intended to help manage the use of state school lands that had been granted to the state by Congress for the support of public education, and to promote the idea of state control over forest land to replace haphazard and unregulated federal supervision. Because most of the land in question was then in federal hands, the board was only really capable of studying the problem and suggesting remedies.<sup>71</sup>

In an article published in *Overland Monthly* in 1886, the board's chairman, Abbot Kinney, explained that the forestry board was preparing a map of the state's forests and was trying to formulate proposed laws to stop fires and theft of timber on the public domain. He argued that the state's forests were in need of protection, that its water supply was in danger, that flooding damage was serious due to lack of protection, and that long-term needs for lumber and firewood necessitated state control.<sup>72</sup>

In pursuit of these goals, the board published four biennial reports (although only the first three are of significance) before it was abolished following creation of the federal Forest Reserve Act under President Harrison in 1891.<sup>73</sup> The first report focused on the cutting of forests in the south-central Sierra and concluded that in the lower foothills the former forest lands had been replaced by dense underbrush. The greatest concern, however, was over the damage caused by fires in disturbed forest areas. While some of this destruction was the result of lumbering and shake-making, most blame was placed on grazers of cattle and sheep. The sheepmen and their animals were also blamed for creating damage to mountain hillsides and meadows.<sup>74</sup>

The second report continued in the same vein, but also discussed the variety and quality of trees included in the Sierra. In a description of Sierran forests, the state botanist referred to the range and its forests as "King Sierra and His Royal Robe," giving an account of the great variety of trees that were represented. In more prosaic terms, the state engineer con-



demned the damage from fires caused primarily by grazers of sheep in the high mountain regions. He also opposed the illegal cutting of timber on federal lands. As a solution, he suggested that all forest lands be controlled by the state of California.<sup>75</sup>

The third biennial report of the State Board of Forestry began by urging the "general government" [federal] to establish proper management of Sierran forests under its control. The board noted that it had drafted a memorial to Congress stressing the urgency of its request, that it had stated its grievances concerning waste and mismanagement and had suggested redress in the form of more stringent federal management. The report also noted the need for more state and federal coordination of related activities. It commended the federal government for pro-

tection of the Big Trees, and for the establishment of the two National Parks. The report pointed out, however, that this protection meant nothing unless federal actions were taken to control forest fires.<sup>76</sup>

The Board of Forestry's report also stressed the need of federal protection of forests because of the increasing use by tourists, sportsmen, and those seeking access to the higher mountains. The revenue generated by these activities and the renown that the state would receive through tourism was seen as very important. While the state had already begun to provide protection to fish and game, the board expressed fear that fires beginning on federal land could affect tourists, sportsmen, and the fauna that inhabited the Sierran streams and mountains. Fire, not lumbermen, was identified as the chief danger to be controlled.<sup>77</sup>



By the end of the nineteenth century, tens of thousands of tourists annually sought out the Sierra for recreation and aesthetic and spiritual satisfaction. Captain William Banning of the Los Angeles area hosted a camping vacation, ca. 1902, for friends and relatives to the Yosemite-Sequoia region, the favorite tourist destination. With the Bannings went a Belgian cook and a supply wagon carrying food and camping and kitchen equipment. By this time, horse-drawn prototypes of modern-day recreational vehicles were in common use. *Courtesy Huntington Library*



By the early 1890s, California had begun to address some of the problems of unregulated use of the Sierra that had resulted from the discovery of gold and the utilization of other resources. The results were not perfect, but scientific study had begun, regulated use was seriously proposed, and some important protective actions had been taken. Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Trees had been granted a measure of protection from private commercial exploitation when they became, in effect, the first state preserves in 1864. Hydraulic mining was controlled, and its most negative effects had begun to abate. The California state government made a serious, though as yet unsuccessful, effort to control the use of forests and lands around Lake Tahoe. The state was in the process of halting the noxious practice of dumping sawdust in Sierran streams. Many California interests had also joined forces to pressure the federal government to establish Yosemite and Sequoia national parks in 1890 and to consider the need to control problems of unregulated forest use. Congress had responded by creating national forest reserves, and the president had withdrawn the giant Sierra National Forest from further private entry. Conservation as a movement had begun, and actions taken in California's Sierra played an important part in the emergence of this new political force.

## V

The rudimentary protections of the Sierra in place by the early 1890s, however importantly they differed from past practices, were not part of any coherent program or policy. In fact, the United States government had no long-term preservationist goal in mind when it set aside the two newly-defined national parks in the Sierra in 1890. At that time, the other unclaimed portions of the Sierra, including most of its forested lands, were only loosely defined as part of the public domain, and therefore open to being filed on under the federal land laws passed from the 1840s to the 1870s. But between 1890 and the turn of the century the conservation impulse, which had led to concern about Sierran problems earlier, did finally produce results. Three key examples of this response are: the creation of the Sierra Club in 1892, the establishment of military patrols to protect Yosemite and Sequoia national parks from unauthorized use, and the legislative authorization for the creation of further forest reserves as precursors to a national forest system.

The Sierra Club was founded by Californians interested in protecting the Sierra Nevada. Such notables as naturalist John Muir, artist William Keith, scientist Joseph LeConte, and university president David Starr Jordan were joined by non-Californians such as Robert Underwood Johnson, editor of the influential

*Century Magazine*, in stressing the need for an organization devoted to defending the range against further destruction. In 1889 Muir and Keith held discussions that resulted finally in 1892 in the formation of the Sierra Club. The articles of incorporation defined the purpose of the club as essentially three-fold: to promote enjoyment and accessibility of the Pacific Coast mountains; to provide accurate information about them; and to promote public and governmental support for the preservation of the Sierra Nevada's natural features.<sup>78</sup>

In effect, the newly formed organization mixed together scientific, educational, and recreational goals into a broad-based but loosely defined program. As such, internal disagreements over policy matters soon surfaced, and by 1895 serious debate about the preservation and management of the new parks and forest areas in the Sierra arose. As no single agency effectively controlled the Sierra's parks, serious problems developed. Such momentous struggles as that over damming and flooding Hetch-Hetchy Valley and the creation of the National Park Service in the next century lie beyond the scope of this study. Even before these issues developed, however, the Sierra Club, while in its infancy, was nevertheless carving out a significant place for itself among the forces that would shape conservation policy in the range.<sup>79</sup>

The issue of protection of Yosemite and Sequoia national parks caused major concern after their creation in 1890. While nominally under the control of the Department of the Interior, no formal procedures or agency existed to prevent continued trespass by any number of illegal users, including sheepherders and logging interests. Between 1890 and 1916, when the National Park Service was created, the U.S. Cavalry patrolled the parks in the months when they were accessible and fairly effectively excluded unauthorized interlopers. After 1916, the Park Service assumed this function.<sup>80</sup>

While the Sierra Club and the U.S. Army worked in the interest of protection of the two national parks, the majority of the unclaimed or uncut Sierran forests remained open to unregulated exploitation in 1890. Through the action of scientists and foresters in the 1880s, however, an emerging consensus on the need for a national policy on the nation's remaining public forests emerged. In 1889, it was the American Forestry Association that pressured President Harrison to take action on federal protection of unclaimed forests. When he did not act, the association memorialized Congress to act instead. In 1891, legislation was passed authorizing the president to create "forest reserves" out of the public domain. As a result, in the 1890s presidents Harrison, Cleveland, and McKinley set aside millions of acres of western



Although this photo of Weber Lake Resort, California, was taken in the 1930s, the resort was originally developed in the 1860s to serve visitors on the way to the Comstock in the 1860s. Similar resorts existed at Independence, Donner, and Tahoe lakes before the turn of the century. *Courtesy Nevada County Historical Society*

forest land in newly defined forest reserves before the turn of the century.<sup>81</sup> Most of these reserves were outside the Sierra Nevada. But between 1893 and 1900, three huge reserves were established in the range. These were a southern reserve containing much of today's Sequoia National Forest, a central reserve containing much of the current Stanislaus National Forest, and a northern reserve encompassing parts of the Eldorado and Tahoe national forests.<sup>82</sup>

Between 1827, when Jed Smith made his arduous trek up the Stanislaus River canyon to the Sierra crest, and 1900, when the United States government acknowledged its responsibilities for the management of some of its land and resources in the Sierra, both the physical characteristics of this magnificent mountain range and human attitudes toward it had changed dramatically. Emigrants from the United States first perceived it as a barrier to entrance into California, and their major interest was to hurry across. They, therefore, had little effect on the range. But between 1850 and 1880, economic development of many kinds, especially mining, logging, grazing,

urbanization, and tourism, had transformed the Sierra. Because many Californians and non-Californians alike believed that some of this economic activity was destroying the range, actions were taken to begin regulation. By the turn of the century, this interest in protecting the "Range of Light," whether utilitarian or aesthetic in purpose, had established the Sierra Nevada as one of the most important places where the American idea of conservation began.

*See notes beginning on page 383.*

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The author's parents, Leo and Maria Ricci, with son George, shown here in Los Angeles in 1934. A typical immigration story, Leo Ricci first came to the United States in 1916. Within a short time, he joined the Army and served in the American expeditionary force during World War I. He later returned to Italy, married Maria, and both immigrated back to America in 1928. *Courtesy of the author.*

# A SHADOW ON THE LAND

## The Impact of Fascism on Los Angeles Italians

*by Gloria Ricci Lothrop*

The impact of World War II on United States residents who were alien residents from belligerent countries was wrenching for many. Five decades later the experiences are largely unfamiliar to the general public. But they have not been forgotten by those who were directly affected.

The Pacific Slope was declared a military zone during World War II, and enemy resident alien groups were subjected to the full range of alien regulation, including detention, restriction, and relocation to specific locations for limited periods of time. Until October 12, 1942, when Italians were exempted from enemy alien status, these policies affected the lives of 52,008 Italian aliens residing in California.<sup>1</sup> The events leading to this crisis in the lives of Italo-Americans, particularly those residing in the western states, was to some degree affected by the relations with Italian émigrés cultivated by the Fascist government of Benito Mussolini in the decades preceding the outbreak of hostilities. The effect of those policies was to cast a long shadow across the lives of Italo-Americans, particularly in several California cities, including Los Angeles, where by the late 1920s they had established a vital and active community.

California had long been the chosen destination for many newly arrived Italians. Its Mediterranean climate, so similar to their homeland, was particularly attractive to Italian agriculturists.<sup>2</sup> By 1940 California's Italian population of 100,911 was the largest of any western state.<sup>3</sup> Italians first settled in southern California in 1823. They owned ranches and vineyards and held public office. Giovanni Leandri, the first to arrive, was a rancher and merchant who maintained a town house on the south side of the Los Angeles plaza. To the north of the plaza lay Calle de las Viñas, inhabited by Italian vintners, including

Giovanni Gazza, Antonio Pelanconi, and Giacomo Tononi. Later Italian settlers in Los Angeles operated grocery stores, music schools, and restaurants. But their numbers were small until the 1920s, when, despite restrictive immigration laws, the Italian population of Los Angeles nearly doubled from 9,650 in 1920 to 16,851 in 1930. By 1920, Los Angeles Italians constituted about 11 percent of all Italians in California. There were also Italian groups in Santa Barbara and Bakersfield, as well as clusterings of Italian fishermen along the coast as far south as San Diego.<sup>4</sup>

For most of these Italians, California was the final destination in a long pattern of transmigration, which usually involved prior residence in the eastern part of the United States. As a result, they generally arrived with a basic mastery of English and some degree of acculturation. In earlier decades the typical immigrants had come from overtaxed farms in the southern part of Italy, the hill towns of Tuscany in central Italy, or from the province of Piemonte in the north. By the 1920s such pioneer settlers had been joined by Italian veterans of World War I and also by political activists disenchanted with the new Fascist regime in Italy. There were, as well, entrepreneurs and professionals attracted by the new economic opportunities available in southern California. Within their ranks were some Italian government operatives with strong Fascist leanings. That the regional origins and the economic endeavors of these newcomers varied widely is reflected in the 1923 membership applications to a local benevolent organization, the Garibaldina Society, which were submitted by laborers, a surgeon, a pharmacist, orchardists, an accountant, several restaurant owners, a business executive, and fifteen musicians.<sup>5</sup>



The decade following World War I represented a period of change and growth for the entire southern California region, as the Pacific Electric rail system and increasing numbers of automobile roads criss-crossed the urban/suburban landscape, and new industries stimulated the growing economy. Each factor affected the local Italian community. Even "Prohibition," ushered in by the passage of the Volstead Act in 1919, sent Italian vintners scrambling for new products and untapped markets. Cucamonga winemakers like Secondo Guasti and Giovanni Vai quickly converted to advertising sacramental wines and medicinal elixirs in order to avoid economic ruin. The same decade brought unexpected prosperity to other Italian immigrants, however. In prewar years, European filmmakers were the acknowledged leaders in the fledgling movie industry. But the misfortunes of World War I had given U.S. cinematographers the advantage. As a result, Hollywood's burgeoning film industry eagerly employed experienced Italian technicians, set designers, international booking agents, and actors. Local business directories also listed an increasing number of Italian antique dealers and restorers, interior decorators, and landscape designers prepared to provide sophistication to the instant aristocracy of Hollywood.<sup>6</sup> Italian muralists, sculptors, stonemasons, and craftsmen in terrazzo and sgraffito work were also in high demand as southern Californians, caught up in the building boom of the 1920s, created Mediterranean-style suburbs from Santa Barbara to San Diego. The authenticity of the landscape was assured by such expert horticulturists as Francesco Francheschi (Dr. Emmanuele Orazio Fenzi), who, at Montariso, his 40-acre arboretum in Santa Barbara, introduced more plants to California than any other individual or firm.

The political attitudes of Italo-American residents of Los Angeles were being shaped by a variety of factors operating in both Italy and the United States. The earlier arrivals, often veterans of the Italian independence movement, had maintained a continuing allegiance to the liberal traditions of Garibaldi and Mazzini, values reinforced by their residence in the United States. They were, at first, indifferent to the reported successes of Italy's new Fascist administration. But gradually their nostalgia for their distant homeland and for their cultural traditions ultimately made them vulnerable to Mussolini's persuasive propaganda. First-generation immigrants and those who still had close family ties to their homeland were even more susceptible to well-planned Fascist blandishments. Finally, there were those recently arrived in the 1920s, generally more educated and politically

active, referred to as the *fuornisciti*, or émigrés. Although they were frequently war veterans escaping Fascist rule, this group, because of their class and status, was particularly offended by American attitudes and policies toward Italians. Although many of them had categorically rejected Fascism, they too derived pride and confidence from the celebration of the "new Italy" that echoed throughout the international press in the late 1920s. They, with the other members of the local Italo-American community, heeded Mussolini's supra-national call of blood to blood. Furthermore, to Italian émigrés whose children were perceptibly drifting from the parent culture, Fascism's commitment to the mother country, to the family, and to religion was a reassuring credo.

As a result of an unrelenting propaganda campaign, Mussolini's government, beginning in the 1920s, urged all Italo-Americans to accept and participate in programs sponsored by the Fascist government. Thus, while Italo-Americans had deliberately chosen to embrace the democratic institutions and economic freedom of their adopted country, in seeming contradiction they ardently celebrated their "*Italianita*."<sup>7</sup>

In the 1920s the Italo-American community of Los Angeles, often referred to as "*La Colonia*," gradually enhanced by increased numbers and increased economic prosperity, was particularly enriched by the activism of recent arrivals in various cultural affairs. As a result, it developed a growing cohesiveness, nourished in part by programs that would later be discovered to have been sponsored or co-opted by the Fascist government. These included: the *Dopo Scuole*, the Italian language and culture after-school programs; the *Gruppo Giovanile*, an Italian young people's club; the *Ex-Combattenti*, an Italian war veterans organization; the California Pioneers, an offshoot of the Fascist Lictor Association; as well as such established organizations as the Italian Catholic Federation, the Dante Alighieri Society, and the Sons of Italy. Mussolini, however, failed to understand the paradox embodied in the Italian American experience. Although lured by nostalgia for the cultural traditions of their mother country, these Americans-by-choice, although confronted with persuasive Fascist propaganda, would choose America in the time of national crisis.

Southern California Italians' growing pride in the Italian heritage found many forms of expression in the 1920s and 1930s. An important facet of heightened Italian self-awareness was in Italian language instruction. Beginning in 1921, the Association of Italian Language Instructors lobbied for the acceptance of Italian as meeting the foreign-language requirement for college admission. By 1939 proficiency in



To maintain family ties and encourage cultural awareness, Italian families in the United States supported Italian culture and language school programs, unaware that these institutions were later utilized as propaganda tools by the Italian Fascist government. Above is a photograph of students enrolled in the southern California Italian language school, *Le Scuole Giovanni Pascoli*, ca. 1930s. *Courtesy of the author.*

Italian was accepted for admission by Pomona College, Occidental College, the University of Southern California, LaVerne College, and the California Institute of Technology. The group's second campaign was to encourage the study of Italian in high schools and colleges. As a result of their success, by 1938 only New York surpassed California in its Italian-language program.

During the two decades for which the Association of Italian Language Instructors' reports are available, recorded enrollment in Italian language classes offered by public day and evening programs at Hollywood, Polytechnic, Lincoln, and Pasadena high schools numbered approximately two hundred students annually. The young scholars sometimes displayed their newly acquired language proficiency in such theatrical productions as Dario Niccodemi's "La Piccina," presented at Hollywood Evening School in 1939. On December 13, 1940, an "Italian Evening"

was staged at Central Junior High School at 451 North Hill Street in Los Angeles. Students at Lincoln High School organized "Il Circolo Giovanile Italiano." At the University of Southern California, which offered courses in Italian literature as well as language instruction, students formed the social group *Giovanezza*.<sup>8</sup>

Amidst the celebration of Italian cultural traditions, it is not surprising that in the 1920s more than two thousand members joined the Sons of Italy, a nationwide group established in 1905 to celebrate Italian cultural traditions. The group had twenty-seven California lodges, five of which were in southern California. The decade also witnessed the organization in southern California of chapters of the Italian war veterans' group, *Associazione Ex-Combatenti e Reduci*, as well as two Italian-language posts of the American Legion. During the decade, the Italian Woman's Club, the Club Eleanore Duse, and the



Italian American Club of Los Angeles supplemented the social and fraternal activities of *Il Circolo Operaio Italiano* and the Garibaldina Society, which had been organized in Los Angeles in 1877.<sup>9</sup>

In 1925, the community's economic cohesiveness was reinforced when a branch of the Italian Chamber of Commerce was established in Los Angeles, initially administered by Stefano Torre. Two years later, the branch was officially recognized by the Italian government. The group was particularly active in organizing the Italian Pavilion at the Pacific Southwest Exposition, held at Long Beach in 1928. Crowds flocked to the fair to view the art exhibits in the Hall of the Caesars and the Hall of Canova. On Italian Night, held on the concluding day of the exposition, September 3, thousands thronged the *Festa in Venezia*, highlighted by the voice of Enrico Caruso transcribed by Victor Records on its recently introduced phonograph discs.

Using their growing network of local Italian newspapers and organizations, by the 1920s Italian Americans began to protest various United States immigration policies. Energized by their growing

pride in their Italian culture and traditions, they spoke out in opposition to the National Origins Act of 1924, whose restrictive quotas were particularly punitive to Italians. Los Angeles Italians strongly supported a petition submitted to the state legislature on April 30, 1929, by the Italian Federation of California, which unsuccessfully urged support of a bill revising the quotas set forth in the National Origins Act. In newspaper editorials they also complained of strong xenophobic currents stimulated by local labor groups attempting to exclude immigrant workers.<sup>10</sup> In 1922 several Italian organizations adopted a resolution protesting the presence of 3,368 Italians in the state's migrant labor camps, a condition first objected to as early as 1915 by Ferdinando Daneo, Italian consul to the western states. In California, as in other western and southern states, contract agricultural workers, including Italians, were subjected to compulsory conditions that had resulted in a federal investigation whose findings were contained in "Report on Peonage," published in 1908.<sup>11</sup> Italian sensitivity to labor exploitation was sufficiently aroused that in 1924 Consul Mellini Ponce de



Many Italian Americans joined social and fraternal organizations that fostered Italian community cohesiveness. This 1939 photograph shows the installation of the Los Angeles Italian branch of the Independent Order of Foresters Lodge. As a published author and prominent member of the community, the only woman included was the author's mother, Maria Angeli Ricci, seated second from the right center. The branch was named after Gloria Ricci (the author), because she was seriously ill at the time with pneumonia. *Courtesy of the author.*

Leon petitioned the Los Angeles City Council regarding injustices allegedly experienced by local Italians such as differential wage schedules and restricted employment.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1920s and 1930s there was within the Italo-American community of Los Angeles a growing solidarity, an expanding network of newspapers and radio programs to facilitate communication, and a strong sense of ethnic pride. But all these elements were subservient to the fact that Italo-Americans had entrusted themselves and their futures to their newly adopted country. These paradoxical commitments would beset them, as their mother country and their adopted land moved ever closer to war.

**I**talo-American criticism of some state and federal policies reflected a growing sense of ethnic assertiveness among immigrant Italians that was in part generated by events in Italy. In March 1919, former militant socialist Benito Mussolini launched the Fascist movement in Milan. By 1922 his Black-shirt followers had successfully marched on Rome and won the recognition of King Victor Emmanuel. Before an enthusiastic throng, *Il Duce* (The Leader) proclaimed that, "Now we aspire to make of Rome the city of our spirit, a city purged, cleansed of all the elements that have corrupted and violated her; we aspire to make Rome the pulsating heart, the

active spirit of the imperial Italy of our dreams."<sup>13</sup> By 1928 Mussolini had consolidated power and had established a fascist dictatorship in Italy.

*Il Duce's* grand scheme also involved the ten million Italian émigrés who had ventured to foreign lands, particularly the United States. To Mussolini they remained Italian even unto the seventh generation, and, as such, they represented potential troops, revenues, and foreign relations benefits. Relations with the *fuorusciti* included services designed to cultivate loyalty, including films, speakers, textbooks for Italian language schools, and organizing patriotic celebrations and tourist excursions to Italy. The government organized Italian immigrant clubs in the United States and even co-opted existing ones. In some instances, it was suspected, Italian government operatives even monitored the Italo-American press.

Mussolini's ideal community rested on a reunification of traditional culture with modern industrial technology. Fascist philosophy asserted that strength emanated from "a common secular-religious practice based on shared political symbols, rituals and language."<sup>14</sup> To this end, such groups as the American Fasci were forged into the Fascist League of North America in 1925.<sup>15</sup> *Il Duce* did not hesitate to court Italo-American support in the United States, although he was not awed by, and in the estimation of some he had little respect for, this upstart colos-

Members of the Italian American community of Los Angeles in the 1930s pose with Italian boxing champion Primo Carnera.  
*Courtesy of the author.*







Recognizing the importance of the large Italian immigrant population in the United States, Mussolini instigated programs designed to cultivate Italian nationalist pride in Italian Americans. As a sign of support for their homeland, members of the Los Angeles Italian American community met with the Italian Olympic team during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. *Courtesy of the author.*

sus. His son-in-law, Count Galeazzo Ciano, noted in his diary on September 3, 1937, that "the Duce let fly at America, country of niggers and Jews, the forces which disintegrate civilization."<sup>16</sup> But Mussolini recognized that 1,623,580 Italo-Americans, representing the largest group of foreign-born in the United States, could advance the Fascist cause. The émigrés represented a potential military reserve in case of national emergency, as well as a source of revenue, both through their voluntary contributions to their families in Italy and by paying various levies.<sup>17</sup> Most importantly, Italian settlers in the United States were potential public-relations advocates who could, sometimes without realizing it, assist the Italian cause on a broad scale by trying to encourage favorable public opinion toward Italy and support for the major financial aid Mussolini needed to advance his Fascist program.<sup>18</sup>

By 1935 the Italian government determined that the Los Angeles community was large enough to justify consular representation independent of San Francisco. As a result, Duke Oberto Caracciolo di San Vitom was reassigned from Cairo. In Los Angeles, as elsewhere, *Il Duce* planned to cultivate emigrant

enclaves as fugitive outposts of the once far-flung "Roman imperium." In Los Angeles the consulate's efforts were partly facilitated by Alessandro Ciardelli-Cerrai, an Italian born in Colombia, who served as director of *Il Lavoro Fascista*, a local unit of the worldwide fascist organization.

To cultivate friendly relations with the United States, over the years Mussolini dispatched to the United States a number of well-known dignitaries. Arctic explorer Umberto Nobile ventured as far as the West Coast, where he was feted at the Italian Hall in Los Angeles. A similar welcome awaited Atlantic flying ace General Francesco Di Pinedo. His superior, and in the estimation of many Di Pinedo's rival, Italian Air Minister Italo Balbo, visited the West Coast after piloting a flight of airplanes across the Atlantic in 1933 for an appearance at the Chicago World's Fair. While touring military bases, Balbo visited the Naval Air Station in San Diego, where he reviewed six squadrons of the U.S. Fleet Air Force. The technical skill of their close-formation flying impressed him so much that in a telegram to Mussolini he declared that he felt the visit to San Diego had more than justified his trip.<sup>19</sup>

During a 1937 visit by *Il Duce's* 21-year-old son, Vittorio, no great popular goodwill was generated, although he expressed a degree of enthusiasm. Of California he observed, "It seems just like my Italy."<sup>20</sup> In addition to visiting an exposition in San Francisco and making a brief stop at the Secondo Guasti mansion in Rancho Cucamonga, young Mussolini headed for Hollywood. But his military bravado appealed to few. A testimonial held in his honor proved to be a dismal failure. Unknown to many, however, was young Mussolini's additional role as his father's emissary in negotiating the formation of RAM, a motion picture production company that was to be the joint venture of Hal Roach Studios and Benito Mussolini.<sup>21</sup>

The government of *Il Duce* continued to sponsor cultural activities within the Italo-American community across the United States throughout the 1930s. In 1934 alone, the Fascists invested 154 million lire in such projects as the Italian Historical Society of the United States, the Casa Italiana at Columbia University, various *circoli di dopo lavoro*, or workers social circles, and the *Dopo Scuole*, the after-school program in language instruction administered by *Direzione Generale degli Italiani all'Estero*. The high priority given to the latter facet of Fascist outreach was

expressed by *Il Duce's* brother, Arnaldo Mussolini, in an interview published on April 11, 1929, in *Popolo d'Italia*. In keeping with Fascist philosophy of national fidelity to the seventh generation, he called for saving the children of Italian immigrants through their Italian culture. To this end, the government subsidized Italian educational programs abroad. In addition to providing monthly stipends of \$20 for each school, free educational materials, and teachers' salaries, the government offered prizes for excellence in language proficiency, which ranged from awards of books and medals to fifteen free trips to Italy given annually to outstanding students and their teachers.

By 1937, forty-seven such schools were organized in California, five or six in San Francisco and an equal number in Los Angeles. They were administered by a board headed by Joseph Parentini, the Italian government's scholastic director for California and Nevada. His responsibility was to expand the program wherever possible. The following year, according to a United Press report, the Italian government invested \$3 million in its educational programs in Latin America, North America, and France.

In 1938 Parentini also established chapters throughout the state, including Los Angeles and

In 1937, *Il Duce* sent his youngest son, 21-year-old Vittorio, on a goodwill visit to California. The trip included negotiating the formation of a joint venture with Hal Roach

Studios of a motion picture production company that became known as RAM. This publicity photograph shows Vittorio meeting with Roach and the Our Gang kids. Mussolini is on the left, Hal Roach on the right. *California Historical Society, Title Insurance and Trust Photo Collection, Department of Special Collections, University of Southern California.*





Santa Barbara, of a young people's club, *Il Gruppo Giovanile*. In Los Angeles, the facility at 1244 Innes Avenue provided social activities, athletic programs, and fencing classes. To direct and help fund the operation, Parentini convened a group of *prominenti* leaders of the local community, appointed by Vice Consul Ernesto Arrighi. Board meetings were devoted to organizing fund raising events, but there were also entertaining presentations on Italian culture and poetry readings. The programs were similar to those of the Italian Cultural Institute of Los Angeles, established in the late 1930s. On June 14, 1938, the inauguration of the flower-filled Innes Avenue facility of *Il Gruppo Giovanile* was captured on film that recorded the attendance of a cross-section of the community, including representatives from the *Ex-Combattenti*, the American Legion, and also the Los Angeles superintendent of schools, Vierling Kersey. Those attending this seemingly neutral cultural event were entertained with a song recital by Baroness Josephine Paterno and partook of an array of sweets, fruits, and wines donated by local entrepreneurs.<sup>22</sup> In Los Angeles, Parentini's primary project, the *Dopo Scuole*, had been given the name *Le Scuole Giovanni Pascoli* and had been placed under the direction of Angela Spadea, a professor of Italian literature who had graduated from the University of Rome. She was advised by a board made up of local *prominenti*, who had also been convened by the local vice-consul.<sup>23</sup> Among its responsibilities, the board was charged with raising money to supplement Italian government funding of the *Dopo Scuole* by organizing such programs as "A Celebration of Christmas in Rome," held at the Wilshire Ebell Club in 1938.

According to the school board's secretary, Maria Angeli Ricci, the curriculum in the Italian schools remained politically neutral until the late 1930s, when it became manifestly pro-Fascist. After that, textbook illustrations portrayed children giving the Fascist salute, and alphabet drills used as examples such words as "*Ballila*," the name of a Fascist youth organization. The staff was also informed that a requisite part of the instruction was to be the singing of "*Giovinezza*," the Fascist anthem. When Dr. Spadea and her staff vigorously objected to the new political overtones of the instructional materials, Parenti's office refused Spadea access to the public school facilities normally used for after-school instruction in San Pedro, Hollywood, and Lincoln Heights. Angered by the abrupt closing of the schools in the face of her criticism, she conveyed her sentiments to the Italian government. "Scoundrel!" was the only word con-



The author's mother, Maria Angeli Ricci, pictured here in 1936, was a published poetess and political columnist for Italian newspapers in Los Angeles and San Francisco in the 1930s. Her first book of poems, *Aque e Salici* (*The Water and the Willows*) was published in 1939. Earlier, Ricci was secretary for the Italian-language school board. *Courtesy of the author.*

tained in Spadea's telegram sent posthaste to Count Ciano, to whom had been entrusted responsibility for the *Dopo Scuole*. Within three days, she received a letter from the consul general's office in San Francisco advising her of her dismissal and the termination of the program in Los Angeles. *Le Scuole Giovanni Pascoli* had come to an abrupt and unceremonious end in the city, and Italo-American disenchantment with the Fascist agenda began to gather momentum in southern California.<sup>24</sup>

The *Ex-Combattenti*, the organization of Italian war veterans that local Italian Americans viewed as simply a philanthropic, patriotic, and social organization, was another important component of Fascist outreach. The Los Angeles chapter of the *Associazione Nazionale di Combattenti Italiani*, or *Ex-Combattenti e*



A professor of Italian literature educated in Rome, Angela Spadea was made director of the Italian-Language school in Los Angeles. Professor Spadea was later fired for protesting the implementation of fascist propaganda in the school curriculum, and the school was closed. *Courtesy of the author.*

*Reduci*, was made up of more recent arrivals, representing a cross-section of the southern California Italo-American community.<sup>25</sup> In early 1938, in order to further broaden the representation, a woman's auxiliary was organized under the leadership of third-generation Californian Isabella Vignolo, who was director of instruction for foreign-language speaking students in the Los Angeles city schools. As she had when she headed the local Dante Alighieri Society, Vignolo vigilantly guarded against any political overtones the Fascists might introduce. Following an inaugural dance and floor show held at the Garibaldina Hall on Castelar Street, the auxiliary began planning the organization's annual picnic, which was to be a fund raiser for *Il Gruppo Giovanile*, to be held at Montebello Stadium on August 14, 1938, from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. The program included gymnastic and fencing demonstrations by the youth group and performances by costumed Italian folk dancers. No such gathering would have been

complete without *Il Tirro*, in which contestants competed in hurling 25-pound rounds of Parmesan cheese.

By official directive or otherwise, the Fascist message was clearly conveyed by sympathetic writers trying to reach the California Italian American population. In the introduction to the impressive volume, *Gente Italiana in California*, published in 1928, the authors held out the hope that the success of the "Fascist revolution" and the creation of a "new Italy" would elicit renewed patriotism and respect among Italian emigrants. As explanation for the publication of this volume profiling Italian residents in California, the authors concluded: "The immigrant wants to collaborate [with the new Italy] but wants a place equal to his station . . . equal to his expert ability already proven in America. . . . He also seeks recognition for his labor, carried out far from his homeland, but nevertheless for the glory of his homeland."<sup>26</sup>

In Mussolini's pursuit of men, money, and international support, it was determined that Italians in the business community would be attracted by economic advantages to be gained by membership in the Italian Chamber of Commerce and the Italian Touring Club. Furthermore, a filiopietistic impulse was to be cultivated by the Italian schools, selected newspapers and organizations, including the Sons of Italy and the Dante Alighieri Society, a worldwide cultural organization established in 1892.

*Il Duce's* appeal and persuasion were not limited to the Italo-American community. Mussolini's strategy gained momentum as a result of widespread approval of the Fascist experiment by some public policy makers in the United States. Other Americans were also enthusiastic about this new European leader. In 1934 Cole Porter composed a hit song that contained the lyric, "You're the tops. You're Mussolini." Both the conservative publication *Commerce and Finance* and the liberal *New Republic* praised Mussolini for his accomplishments. *The Wall Street Journal* portrayed him as a tough and direct luminary. He was commonly described as a man of action, often in athletic terms. A *New York Post* writer fancied *Il Duce* as having "punch," explaining that, "There is punch in his eyes, the darting thrust of a rapier. There is punch in the light, springing step with which he carries his well-built body—the punch of a pugilist."<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, the rapprochement between Fascism and the Roman Catholic Church, achieved in the 1929 Conciliation Treaties, which brought church and state closer together in Italy, cast Mussolini as a champion of the church. In the estimation of the



American Catholic community, *Il Duce* gave a new economic security to the Vatican through these Lateran accords. To many, *Il Duce* had, by his signature, liberated the papacy from its second Babylonian captivity.

The generous praise of Mussolini expressed by the American Catholic clergy led anti-Fascist writer Gaetano Salvemini to declare that, "if anyone would gather up all the utterances of the American cardinals and bishops about Mussolini, all the sermons, all the articles and essays by Catholic priests and monks . . . one would have the most impressive and astounding anthology of Fascist glorification."<sup>28</sup>

The new harmony between the Roman Catholic Church and the Fascist state offered added opportunities for affirmation of the Italian government from such groups as the Italian Catholic Federation (ICF) in the United States. As an example of this growing affiliation, in 1935 California chapter members were strongly urged to support Mussolini's campaign of military conquest in Ethiopia. Representatives from the fourteen active parish chapters in the Los Angeles area met at regional gatherings at the Hayward Hotel, where they were subjected to increasingly intense exhortations in support of "*La Patria*." A similar message urging support for the forces of anti-communism was delivered in 1937 in Los Angeles by the editor of the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, who addressed the ICF at an outdoor Mass attended by 100,000, including non-Italian members of the Catholic hierarchy, many of whom had paraded down Figueroa Street to the Coliseum. Support of anti-communist efforts was reiterated in Archbishop John J. Cantwell's remarks at the Coliseum event. Moreover, in affirmation, the key action taken at the federation's annual convention, which followed at the Biltmore Hotel, was an endorsement of Pope Pius XI's anti-communist appeal. Clearly, the issues of faith and politics were inextricably interwoven and were to become more so as the world moved toward the bleak despair of another world war.<sup>29</sup>

In the frequent discussions of the "new Italy," Mussolini was most frequently compared in the United States to Caesar, Napoleon, and even Theodore Roosevelt. Organizations such as William Pelley's Silver Shirts, the crusader White Shirts of Chattanooga, Tennessee, and the Knights of the White Camellia borrowed from the Fascist canon and ritual. Most successful among these American Fascist disciples was Fr. Charles Coughlin, an influential radio priest. Throughout the 1930s Coughlin's broadcasts, transmitted from a small studio in Des Moines, Iowa, and faithfully listened to by more than 15 million Amer-

icans, adapted a Fascist platform to American culture. *Il Duce's* credo had assumed legitimacy among a variety of American fringe groups, as well as among conservative financiers and intellectuals from Columbia University to the University of California at Berkeley.<sup>30</sup>

Mussolini had also curried favor within two American presidential administrations during the 1920s. The passage in 1926 of a bill, supported by the Coolidge administration, which provided for the lenient settlement of Italy's war debt, was a major economic victory for the Fascist government. The economic relief to Italy came in tandem with loans of over \$300 million dollars extended between 1925 and 1930 by New York's financial organization of Morgan, Blair and Company.<sup>31</sup>

The emergence of the New Deal administration after 1933 did not initially alter the U.S. government's seeming amity with the Fascist government in Italy. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's ambassador to Italy, Breckenridge Long, wrote to FDR of Mussolini's energy and of his dignity. In fact, until his resignation in 1936, Long argued against United States sanctions toward Italy during the Ethiopian conflict.<sup>32</sup> FDR himself described Mussolini and Stalin as "blood brothers."<sup>33</sup> In personal letters the president also confessed that he was deeply impressed by what Mussolini had accomplished, admitting that he kept in close touch with that "admirable Italian gentleman."<sup>34</sup> In addition, the president and his party could never afford to forget that the "Roosevelt coalition" drew heavily upon the urban Italian vote. This was a fact that would help shape policies affecting Italian Americans in the early phases of World War II.

Encouraged by international approbation of his regime, Mussolini expanded the program of outreach to Italian émigrés. A significant aspect of Mussolini's outreach plan was the Fascist League of North America, also known as the "Blackshirts," headed by Paul Castorina. Inductees to local *Fascio* units paid \$13 a year and were issued membership cards bearing the message "The Fascists abroad must obey the laws of the land where they live. They must defend Italianism in the past and in the future."<sup>35</sup> Membership also entitled those who joined to don the official uniform, consisting of a black sateen shirt, flowing black tie, black trousers, spiral puttees, and a tasseled overseas cap. Variations of this uniform were available to young men who became members of the affiliated youth organizations, the *Ballila* or the *Avanguardista*. Italy's assignment of Count Thean Revel to organize the *Fascios* in North America in the late 1920s was met with calls for a congressional investigation con-

ducted in 1928. At the pointed request of U.S. Secretary of State Henry Stimson, the Fascist League was dissolved the next year, and the Lictor Foundation became its successor.<sup>36</sup> In Los Angeles, the Italian Pioneers of California was organized as a chapter of the nationwide Lictor League. Although according to its charter the group was dedicated to honoring early California Italian settlers, the club's organization was more evocative of Mussolini's new imperialism than of immigrants on the American frontier. The group was headed by a triumvirate of directors—a scribe, a questor, and a *dittatore*.

Admiration for Mussolini, which in the United States peaked in the late 1920s, gave way to growing criticism in the succeeding decade. Critics increasingly raised questions about Italy's expansionist foreign policy and challenged the suspected practice of Fascist censorship of the 120 Italian-language papers published in the United States in 1940, about ten percent of which were more or less Fascist.<sup>37</sup> As a reflection of the changing public sentiment, one political analyst observed that "the Italian Fascist organization is not a threat to the nation. However, it is the impression of the writer that the Italian Fascists exercise a much stronger influence over their racial groups in the United States than do the German Nazis."<sup>38</sup>

American disenchantment with *Il Duce* increased after the assignment in 1934 of high Fascist official Piero Parini to oversee Italo-American cultural affairs in the United States. Relations between the two countries became further strained after Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935. United States opposition to the invasion was strong, although isolationists in Congress succeeded in limiting American intervention to embargoes on oil and other raw materials. In response, Fascist propagandists urged Italo-Americans to protest what they charged was malicious and preconceived hostility toward Italy. Reminded of their ties to their homeland or perhaps because of pressures exerted on their families still in Italy, more than one thousand Italo-Americans enlisted in the Italian campaign in Ethiopia. Emigrés in Los Angeles and other cities were also urged to aid this "just cause" by donating money and even their wedding rings, to finance the Italian military effort. In response to the American embargo on copper shipments to Italy, Fascists persuaded Italo-Americans to make up for the shortfalls by sending 800 tons of copper postcards.<sup>39</sup> In San Francisco, during the fall of 1935, Sylvester Andreani, an honorary member of the Scavengers Association, urged the group to donate its time to collect large quantities of scrap metal on

behalf of the Italian Red Cross. Until forced by a court order, however, labor leader Harry Bridges prevented the Longshoremen's Union from loading the two or three tons of material the scavengers had deposited at Pier 41 in San Francisco.

The increasingly negative public sentiment toward Fascist Italy in the United States was reflected in a 1936 report from the Italian embassy in Washington, which commented on "the atmosphere of hostility and incomprehension" toward Italy. The swing away from *Il Duce* hastened further in July of that year, a mere two months after Ethiopia's surrender in May 1936. Spanish army units headed by the leftist-oriented Popular Front proclaimed a revolution against their government. Support for their cause among American intellectuals not only created greater distance between the United States and Fascist countries, it also accorded a new legitimacy to the anti-Fascist *fuorusciti* who had fled to the United States shortly after Mussolini's successful march on Rome in 1922. Some were members of the Anti-Fascist Alliance of North America. Others edited more than a dozen Italo-American newspapers, including Carmelo Zito, editor of *Il Corriere del Popolo* in San Francisco. Some were among the three thousand members of the Mazzini Society founded in the 1930s. Others were active within labor union ranks, including the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. But their credibility was to be brief. Just as the Popular Front faltered in Spain, the communist Soviet Union allied itself with the Axis in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The political left in the United States temporarily lost its legitimacy. As a further irony, with the advent of World War II, all Italian non-citizens, including the anti-Fascists, were declared enemy aliens.<sup>40</sup>

Mussolini's entry into an Axis alliance with Adolph Hitler in 1936 filled Americans with added concern. In response, the Italian government tried to avoid compromising its still-substantial popularity in the United States, which the Fascists had so attentively nurtured. Thus, they carefully avoided joining in any propaganda programs with their new ally. Nevertheless, in Los Angeles the philosophy common to both the Italian and German regimes brought some sympathetic local Germans and Italians together at a meeting at Deutches Haus, where on June 12, 1937, the National Protective Order of Gentiles was convened. One of the first orders of business was approval of a motion extending membership to Italians, Latin Americans, and White Russians, as well as Germans.<sup>41</sup>

In November 1938, to underscore the solidarity of



Italian and American World War I veterans, the American Legion and the *Ex-Combattenti* joined in a commemoration of the Armistice at Patriotic Hall. The intermingling of the two national traditions was evident in the playing of both national anthems, the delivery of Vice Consul Duke Caracciolo's speech in Italian, and the response by attorney C. M. Cas-truccio delivered in English. In addition to recitations by students enrolled in the *Dopo Scuole*, the Italian government arranged for a showing of *White Squadron*, a military film highlighting Fascist air prowess. The well-attended community event was one example of how seemingly innocent programs could be used by the Fascists to engender support for Mussolini's program.<sup>42</sup> Ultimately, their efforts were futile, however. When World War II was declared, the veterans met one last time with their president, Luigi Franceschini. They voted to donate the balance in their treasury to the American Red Cross, and then they disbanded for the duration.

Despite *Il Duce's* public relations efforts, world events had heightened tensions and sharpened enmities. By 1940 there was growing public apprehension in the United States that the alien community, representing 3.5 percent of the nation's population, could possibly engage in espionage and sabotage. Members of Congress also voiced concern about the influence of alien propagandists. Consequently, in the spring of 1940, it passed the Alien Registration Act (the Smith Act), which was signed into law by President Roosevelt in June. Beginning on August 27, 1940, under the provisions of the Smith Act, the government conducted a massive registration and fingerprinting of 4,921,452 aliens, fourteen years of age and older. As part of the registration process, all aliens were also required to answer forty-two questions concerning their marital status, residence, occupation, organizational memberships, and condition of entry into the United States. The Smith Act marked a new era in America's relationship with its immigrant alien population.

Los Angeles Italian Americans also responded to the war in Europe. Despite growing United States concern about the activities of non-citizens within its borders, on February 7, 1941, Spartico Bonomi, former president of the Italian Catholic Federation and secretary of the local chapter of the *Ex-Combattenti*, issued an invitation to a fundraiser to be held in Garibaldi Hall to gather funds for food and medicine for Italians displaced by the European military conflict. The appeal was also carried on the several Italian radio programs broadcast from Los Angeles: Giovanni Cardellini and Filippo Fordellone's "Radio Giornale Italiano," on station KGER; Arturo De Nun-

zio's "Corriere dell'Aria" and "Piccolo Teatro dell'Aria" on station KMTR; Joseph Mastro's "The Italian Hour" and Fordellone's "Italian Radio Melodies" on station KIEV. By February 21, 1941, \$568 had been donated to the cause, with the *Ex-Combattenti* and the Club Eleanore Duse each contributing one hundred dollar donations.<sup>43</sup> By March 7, 1941, the fund amounted to \$2,403, "Italian Radio Melodies" having garnered \$86 in its radio appeal. By May 2, 1941, with the eleventh list of donors again published on the front page of *L'Italo Americano*, a total of \$10,775 had been raised by fraternal and philanthropic groups, citizens and non-citizens who were loyal to their adopted country, but who also still harbored a proud and nostalgic attachment to the mother country of which the Fascists had deftly taken advantage.

This local fundraising was conducted against an increasingly tense national political scene. While Italo-Americans raised money for their loved ones in the "old country," the surge of international events was also forcing them to clarify their national commitments and loyalties. The registration required by the Smith Act had resulted in a rush of applications for first papers and a proliferation of citizenship-training schools to prepare immigrants for United States citizenship examinations. Reflecting the growing concerns of non-citizens, in January 1941, the Committee to Protect Those Born Abroad and the Committee for the Defense of Immigrants, claiming the support of 100,000 petitioners, appealed to Congress to provide remedial regulations to facilitate naturalization.<sup>44</sup>

Along with these efforts to legitimize their individual relationships to the United States, some Italo-Americans pursued a contradictory course as they continued to side with their mother country amid developing events in the European war. For example, on January 17, 1941, the Italian American press in Los Angeles proudly reported an Italian victory in the Mediterranean, which had, in their estimation, decisively demonstrated that this route would continue to be barred to England.<sup>45</sup> A week later, the press reported in great detail the British admission of error in dropping 13,000 tons of bombs on Malta. With enthusiasm it also carried the news that the United States ambassador to England, Joseph P. Kennedy, had spoken out against U.S. military involvement against the Axis.

As loyal ex-patriots, southern California Italians shared the Fascist government's political antipathy toward Great Britain. In an editorial marking FDR's third inauguration, *L'Italo Americano* issued a call for a joint meeting between the U.S. president, Mussolini, and Hitler to offset the tensions generated by

American participation in the Lend Lease Plan.<sup>46</sup> In the same issue, editor Cleto Baroni declared that "it is evident that England . . . is bent upon prostrating Italy and demoralizing Italians within and beyond the peninsula, not only with stupendous force, but also with defamatory propaganda, which in our estimation is unparalleled in history."<sup>47</sup>

Within the local community there were critics of this close alignment with the Italian cause, including state Senator Joseph Pedrotti's Italian Progressive League and the Mazzini Society. In seeming response to expected criticisms of its editorial position, its reporting of the war, and the weekly listing of Italian Aid donors on its front pages, *L'Italo Americano* declared in an editorial: "We are not at war and will not be until declared by Congress. Until then, each of us has the right and the duty to express our opinions, especially on questions which are so tremendous and of such vital importance to the community and its citizens."<sup>48</sup>

However, the luxury of siding with a former homeland and indulging in a traditional national antipathy toward Great Britain was clearly in jeopardy by mid-1941.<sup>49</sup> That May, 125 Italians associated with the New York World's Fair were interned by the United States government at recently prepared facilities located at Fort Missoula, Montana. The next month the U.S. government ordered Italian consulates closed. In July, Italian public information libraries across the United States were no longer in operation. The United States Constitution assured rights of free speech and assembly, but a time of emergency was fast approaching when the suspension of such liberties, particularly for aliens, appeared imminent.

An indication of the emergence of such policies was evident in a speech delivered in Los Angeles by United States Attorney General Robert Jackson at "I Am An American Day" ceremonies in early February 1941. While assuring listeners that the government had no intention of molesting foreigners, he added, "we know also that there are some foreign governments who pursue non-citizens here in America to force them to believe and behave as they wish. This influence is exerted in some foreign language newspapers, by foreign agents, and directly by the governments themselves. . . . While foreigners know their well being is protected in the United States, but not always by the governments in power in their native lands, they must also understand that their security is placed in jeopardy when they engage in activities hostile to the United States. It is the duty of new citizens to assist those not yet naturalized to resist foreign pressures and to understand that while

here, it is their duty to remain loyal to the United States, their host . . . We have a right to expect the loyalty that leads to no division."<sup>50</sup>

The intensifying wartime pressures caused local Italian Americans to modify their positions. Not only was the attorney general's warning published on page one of *L'Italo Americano*, the first page also carried an appeal to buy defense bonds. The editorial was now filled with support for the steps the U.S. government had taken toward military preparedness. It is worthy of note, however, that this February 7, 1941, issue, which represents a turning point in the paper's political position, continued to carry the usual announcement by the Italian Consulate, requesting information on lost co-nationals. It was an ironic inclusion in light of the warning in Jackson's speech that certain government offers to seek relatives and friends upon request were merely ruses to obtain names of persons in the United States who could be influenced for conspiratorial motives. The following month, an Independence Day editorial in *L'Italo Americano* continued to convey a politically safe stance, reminding readers: "There are millions of people who face anti-democratic doctrines imposed by force. In response America has launched a gigantic defense program to protect against any assault on human rights."<sup>51</sup>

Italians in southern California had been warned that, in time of war, loyalties would be tested and clearly defined allegiance would be expected. It was a message understood, especially as families, soon after American entry into the war in December 1941, began sending their sons off to war. The Italo-Americans under arms, representing a significant portion of the armed services, were the largest ethnic minority in the United States military.

On December 7, 1941, the Enemy Alien Control Unit of the Justice Department, citing Section 21, Title 50, of the United States Code and Presidential Proclamation 2525, apprehended 1,000 Italian enemy aliens, 48 of them in Los Angeles. On December 16, 1941, the local detainees, including 110 Germans, 364 Japanese, and 25 Italians, were transferred by train from Terminal Island to internment camps including Fort Missoula, Montana.<sup>52</sup> Italian Catholic Federation President Spartaco Bonomi, radio personality Felipo Fordellone, and newspaper publisher Dr. Giovanni Falasca were among the southern Californians who would be detained until 1943 at "Fort Bella Vista," their name for the isolated Montana military site.<sup>53</sup>

Enemy aliens not in custodial detention were required to register and were subjected to numerous



Alien Registration No. 4067031

Name Amelia Cinquini  
(First name) (Middle name) (Last name)

RIGHT INDEX FINGERPRINT





Amelia Cinquini  
(Signature of holder)

Witnessed by B. Minicini  
555 Buller St.  
South San Francisco, Calif.

Birth date June 22 1881  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Born in Colloidi Lucca Italy  
(City) (Province) (Country)

Citizen or subject of \_\_\_\_\_

Length of residence 28 yrs., 8 mos  
(Country) in United States

Address of residence 626 Railroad Ave  
(Street address or rural route)  
South San Francisco, San Mateo California  
(City) (County) (State)

Height 5 ft., 1 in.

Weight 145 lb.

Color of hair Grey

Distinctive marks None

Joseph Balbin  
(Signature of Identification Official)

Application filed in Alien Registration Division. Copy filed with Federal Bureau of Investigation office at San Francisco, Calif.

16-20180-1

The Alien Registration Act (also known as the Smith Act), passed by Congress in 1940, resulted in the registration and fingerprinting of over four million Italian aliens. Above is the registration card of Amelia Cinquini, a 62-year-old Italian-immigrant homemaker living in South San Francisco since 1906. Still non-English speaking and unable to sign her name in 1942, her husband managed to keep his job as a groundskeeper at the Colma cemetery during World War II.

Courtesy of Robert Cinquini Lindeborg.

From Post Office SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300

POSTMASTER: If this article is undeliverable as addressed, return with reason for nondelivery as directed in the instructions.

Registered No. 106

**DELIVER TO ADDRESSEE ONLY**

Do not deliver to any address other than that originally placed on this article by the sender.

Do not forward to any other post office for delivery.

NAME Amelia Cinquini

ADDRESS 626 Railroad Ave  
South San Francisco, Calif.


Instructions to Delivery Employee:  
 Before delivery of this article to addressee—  
 (1) Compare photograph inside.  
 (2) Ask for production of Alien Registration Receipt Card.

16-20180-1

restrictions.<sup>54</sup> While federal directives were unevenly enforced across the United States, Lt. General John L. DeWitt, commander of Military District One, comprising several western states including California, was meticulous in the imposition of all aspects of Proclamation 2525. Unauthorized travel outside the enemy aliens' immediate communities was prohibited, as was their presence near docks, airfields, power installations, and other strategic facilities.<sup>55</sup> Beginning in January 1942, local authorities and FBI agents, using executive search warrants issued by the Justice Department, investigated enemy alien homes for contraband, including photographic equipment and flashlights. On March 24, 1942, a curfew was imposed on southern California enemy aliens, confining them to their homes between 8 P.M. and 6 A.M., and restricting non-work related travel to a five-mile radius. Periodic compliance checks by law enforcement authorities were commonplace.<sup>56</sup>

By February, placards were posted announcing in German, Japanese, Italian, and English the evacuation of enemy aliens, even the aged and infirm, from strategic locations. Among the sixty-nine relocation areas designated throughout the state, sites in Los Angeles County included Downey, Vernon, and parts of Santa Monica.<sup>57</sup> Resolutions calling for internment of all enemy aliens were passed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Orange County Grand Jury, the Native Sons of the Golden West, the American Legion, and the Los Angeles chapter of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.<sup>58</sup> The sheer numbers of potential internees and political expediency ultimately confined the thrust of Executive Order 9066 to Japanese aliens and citizens. But Italian aliens in Military District One also bore the burden of restriction, regulation, and for some, detention, until October 12, 1942, when, in a speech delivered at Carnegie Hall, Attorney General Francis Biddle declared that Italian residents in the United States were no longer to be designated as enemy aliens.<sup>59</sup>

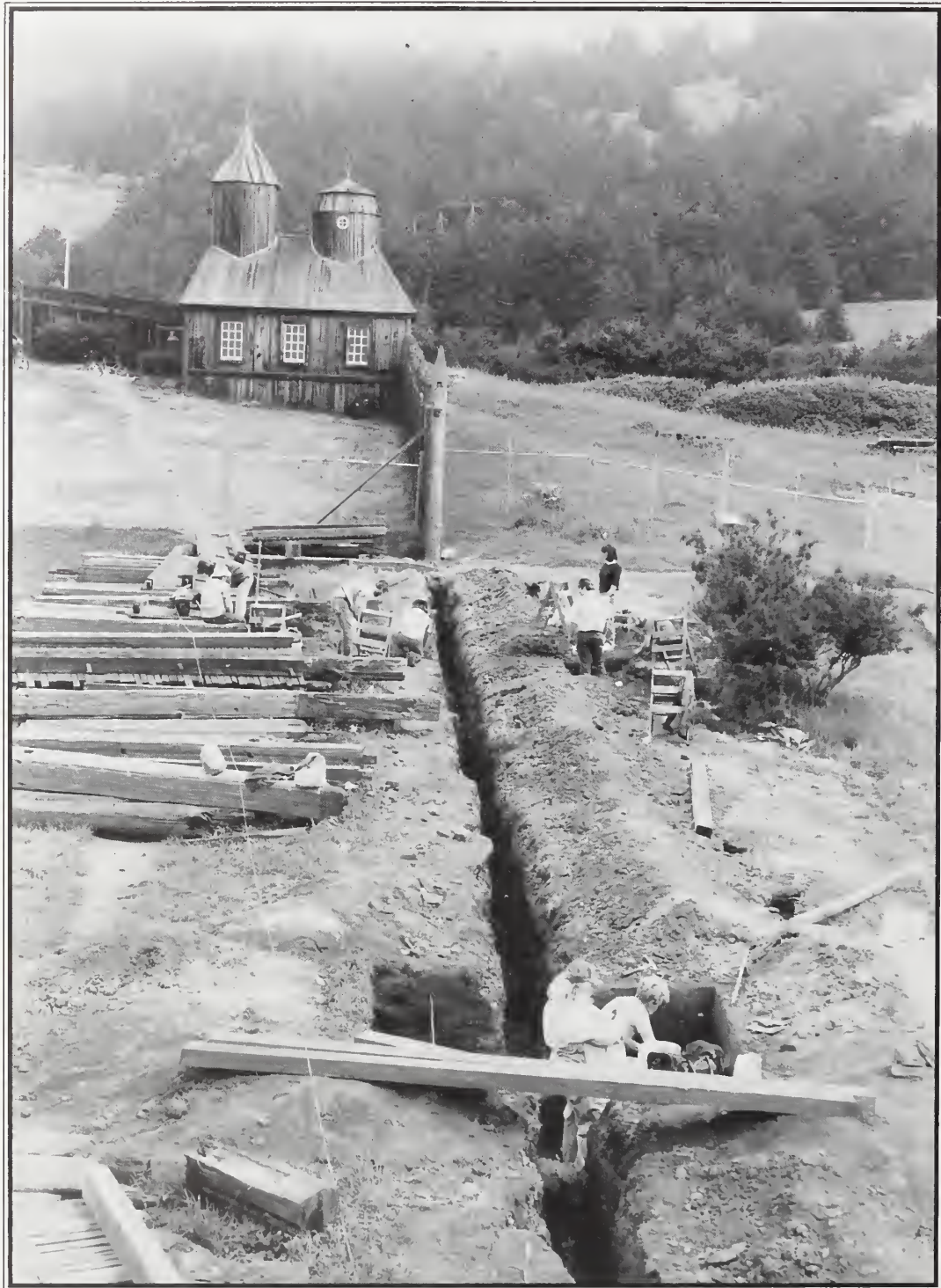
For Italian Americans, the repudiation of Fascist propaganda was now rapid and complete. For some there would be a price exacted for the swaggering

political indiscretions of earlier days. For all Italian non-citizens, the months following December 1941 would be filled with apprehension, confusion, and fear, as the government developed a three-faceted program of detention, regulation of resident aliens, and evacuation and relocation. It would, to some degree, affect every Italian American living in Military District One, as the long shadow of war darkened their lives. 

*See notes beginning on page 385.*

*Gloria Ricci Lotthrop, honored as a Fellow of the California Historical Society in 1994, holds the W. P. Whitsett Chair in California History at California State University, Northridge. The writer, who received her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California in 1970, has authored a number of studies, including *Recollections of the Flathead Mission* (1978), *Pomona, a Centennial History* (1987), and *A Guide to the History of California* (1989), of which she was co-editor. In her more than four score articles, she has focused largely on the history of minorities and women in the American West, particularly California.*





A view of Fort Ross State Historic Park, Fort Ross, California, 1989, with the restored chapel in the background. As evidence that Fort Ross thrives as a vital historic site, this photograph captures Sonoma State University archaeologists at work along the eastern stockade wall, with construction underway for the new wall. With its multi-ethnic settlement dating to the early 1800s, Fort Ross has directed several programs for archaeological work. Since the 1970s, four California universities have participated in research at the site. *Photograph by E. Breck Parkman.*

# FORT AND SETTLEMENT

## INTERPRETING THE PAST AT FORT ROSS STATE HISTORIC PARK

*by E. Breck Parkman*

In 1812, Ivan Kuskov founded an agricultural and fur-gathering outpost of the Russian-American Company on the shores of northern California, naming the settlement "Ross," the archaic name for the Russian motherland.<sup>1</sup> In the preceding year, Kuskov had arranged to lease the land needed for the colony from the native inhabitants, the Kashaya Pomo. This "lease" was formalized and reconfirmed in later years, at which time the Pomo appear to have ceded the land to the Russians.<sup>2</sup> As was customary for company outposts, Kuskov constructed a fortified enclosure with stout palisade and cannon. His fear of attack may have been the result of previous company experiences with the native people of Alaska, rather than any real sense of hostilities on the part of the California inhabitants. Within a few years, any serious fear of attack on Colony Ross would almost certainly have dissipated.

Claiming sovereignty over all of California, Spain (and later Mexico) reacted to the creation of Colony Ross with political protest. Ross was perceived to be a Russian fortress, the "Presidio de Ross." The Russians, however, commonly referred to Ross as a settlement. With the arrival of the first Americans, following the company's sale of Ross to Sacramento Valley rancher and entrepreneur John Sutter in 1841, the name "Fort Ross" was applied to the settlement, and it has remained with us to the present day.

The former Russian settlement is preserved within Fort Ross State Historic Park, a unit of the California state park system. The park receives more than 200,000 visitors a year, and one of its primary missions is to preserve and interpret aspects of life at Ross settlement.<sup>3</sup> Major archaeological and histori-

cal projects now underway promise to reveal important details about day-to-day life at Ross, resulting in a re-evaluation of the current and past interpretive programs for historical accuracy. It is probable that the defensive aspects of Colony Ross have been over-emphasized in both the priority of reconstruction and interpretation, due in part to the use of the term "fort" instead of "settlement" in the park's name. This article will serve as a preliminary discussion of semantics and interpretation at Fort Ross State Historic Park, will attempt to distinguish the Russian "Selenie Ross" (Settlement Ross) from the "Presidio de Ross" and "Fort Ross" of the Spanish, Mexican, and American imaginations, and will illustrate the semantical pitfalls of interpreting daily life at the Russian settlement.

### RUSSIAN FORTIFICATIONS AND ROSS AS A FORTIFIED SETTLEMENT

During the Russian expansion across Siberia, special fortifications (known as *ostrogs*) were established in order to control rivers and portages.<sup>4</sup> Special books detailed the construction of these fortifications, and they were apparently distributed by the Russian-American Company to the founders of their North American outposts. For example, in a letter dated August 9, 1794, Grigorii Shelikhov directed Alexander Baranov to establish the fortified settlement of New Archangel (Sitka), noting that "You should refer to information in the books on fortifications. A good number of these have been sent to you."<sup>5</sup>

Baranov established New Archangel in 1799 in order to counter American and English trade with the Tlingit people (known by the Russians as the *Kolosh*), who captured the settlement in 1802 and attacked it



again in 1809 and 1813. When Captain Basil Golovnin visited New Archangel in 1817, he noted that:

The fort stands on a high rocky hill beside the harbor. . . . and being enclosed by a thick palisade with wooden towers serving as bastions and being provided with dozens of guns of various kinds and calibers and a sufficient number of small arms and ammunition, it is really awesome and impregnable to the local savages, but it is no fortress to a European power, even to the power of one frigate.<sup>6</sup>

Tikhmenev, in his history of the Russian-American Company, also noted the vulnerability of the New Archangel fortifications to the vessels of European powers.<sup>7</sup> He described the fortifications as follows:

The main fort built on a high promontory where the chief manager's house is built, is armed with seventeen cannon from twelve to twenty-four pounds caliber. The port is separated from the Kolosh village by a high palisade extending from the seashore to the north of Swan Lake and for about thirty sazhen on its opposite shore. Where the palisade begins on the seashore, the port is protected by a blockship with three guns; and by the so-called Kolosh battery of six guns. There are four towers three stories high at the corners of the palisade; in the second story are placed from three to six cannon depending upon the size of the towers. A battery of twelve cannon from six pounds up to one pud caliber is in the harbor, the cannons directed toward the Kolosh village. The garrison is made up of all the male adults in the settlement, numbering 550. This includes about 180 soldiers from the Siberian infantry regiments and about 90 sailors from the navy and merchant marine. Every man knows his duties in case of alarm and has firearms.<sup>8</sup>

The fortification of New Archangel was a necessary precaution against the Tlingit. The defensive nature noted above suggests a very cautious approach to settlement planning. The Tlingits' 1802 attack on New Archangel reinforced the need for caution. However, there was some controversy about the effectiveness of fortified outposts. Lieutenant Zagoskin, in his 1841 visit to Fort Kolmakov, noted that:

The concept of a fort required the building of a wall or enclosure, the sending of Russian carpenters, the transport of provisions especially for them, and a useless increase in the number of men to maintain a useless watch. . . . I agree with all the managers of our posts in this country that a walled enclosure which is not manned by sentries (and sentries are out of the question given the limited numbers of our men) is far more dangerous than buildings set right

out in the open. It is easier to set fire to a wall, and such piles of snow are heaped against the outside of it in winter that they offer an easy access to the fort.<sup>9</sup>

When Kuskov began construction of Ross in 1812, he probably had in his company builders familiar with the Siberian ostrog-style architecture utilized at New Archangel, since a walled-enclosure was constructed in which a number of the settlement's primary structures were located.<sup>10</sup> Although Kuskov had arranged to lease the land from the local Pomo, common sense would have dictated that he fortify the settlement. This may have been a result of recent native attacks on Alaskan outposts.<sup>11</sup> The fortifications of Ross settlement were described by numerous visitors.<sup>12</sup> The fortifications consisted of a wooden enclosure, the walls of which were about twenty feet high. Two blockhouses with cannon were situated in the northeastern and southwestern corners of the enclosure. Each of the four walls of the enclosure had a door defended by a mortar. When the Russian ship *Apollo* visited Ross in 1822, Achille Schabelski described the fortifications and noted, "All that I observed was in excellent order."<sup>13</sup>

However, it appears that a decade later, the fortifications were being neglected. An 1833 confidential report to Mariano Vallejo, a military official of the Mexican government in northern California, reported that "the fort is in a constant state of deterioration" and "the walls and buildings are constructed of weak timbers. . . . The walls could not withstand a cannon ball of any calibre."<sup>14</sup> In the same year, Wrangel noted that "almost all the buildings, and the palisade itself with the watchtowers are so old and dilapidated that they need repairs, or they will have to be replaced by new structures."<sup>15</sup> A decade earlier, in November 1824, a strong wind had collapsed three of the fortified walls.<sup>16</sup> It is probable that the fortifications of Ross were better cared for in the early years of the settlement, when the threat of attack seemed a greater possibility.

Auguste Duhaut-Cilly, the French sea captain who visited Russian California in 1828, was impressed with Ross settlement's civil defense. He noted that:

Much order and discipline appear to exist at Ross; and though the director is the only chief who is an officer, everywhere is noticed the effects of a minute care. The colonists, at once workmen and soldiers, after being busied all day with the labors of their various occupations, mount guard during the night. Holidays they pass in reviews and in gun and rifle practice.<sup>17</sup>



A very early and important rendering of the Ross settlement was made by the Frenchman Auguste Duhaut-Cilly, who sailed *Le Héros* on an extensive voyage in the 1820s, illustrating his written account of the expedition with precise drawings such as this one. In addition to the main, walled compound, this *View of the Russian Establishment*, ca. 1827, shows garden plots and numerous small outbuildings that lay beyond the fort's perimeter but were not rebuilt after the site became a state park in 1906. *Courtesy California Department of Parks and Recreation.*

Visiting Ross in 1822, Father Mariano Payeras noted that two sentinels chimed bells each hour.<sup>18</sup> The 1833 report to Vallejo observed that a sentry was stationed at the gate, and checked all who entered or left the compound.<sup>19</sup> The report also noted, however, that "the settlement has no military force, for those residing there are all businessmen or merchants," and that "each commissioned individual keeps a musket in his house," while "sixty extra muskets and eleven rifles are kept in a gunrack in the antechamber of the commander's house."<sup>20</sup> As historian H. H. Bancroft noted, "the presence of these guns [cannon], with the natural strength of the site and the strict system of sentinels and drill never relaxed, gave to Ross the appearance of a military fortress rather than a fur-hunting and trading post."<sup>21</sup>

But can we consider Ross to have been primarily a military fortress? Tlingit hostilities against Alaskan

outposts had occurred just prior to Kuskov beginning construction of the Ross settlement in 1812. Although he had negotiated a lease agreement with the local Kashaya Pomo and Bodega Miwok, Kuskov would have known that their territories extended only a short distance inland, and that the nearby interior was inhabited by potentially hostile tribes, as witnessed by Spanish intrusions into the northern San Francisco Bay area. It appears that Kuskov fortified Ross settlement as a precaution against Indian attack, rather than in fear of other Euro-American powers. Since his builders came from New Archangel, they would have been familiar with the Siberian ostrog architecture utilized there, and it would have been a natural decision to fortify Ross. Thus, the fortifications would have been a secondary, albeit potentially necessary, aspect of the Ross settlement.





Fort Ross Cove, looking south, 1988. Attracted to the waters of northern California by the abundance of sea otters, the Russians used Bodega as their port. Because the surrounding terrain was treeless, however, they located their coastal settlement eighteen miles northwest, in a heavy forest and near the mouth of a river. By 1814 they had erected a barracks, kitchen, bathhouse, warehouse, stable, tannery, mill, storehouse, barns, and other buildings. *Photograph by E. Breck Parkman.*

#### NATIVE AMERICAN REACTION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ROSS

Native American reaction to the establishment of Ross appears to have been favorable in the initial years of occupation. In 1811, Kuskov arranged for the construction of the settlement adjacent to the Kashaya village of Mettini.<sup>22</sup> Apparently, the Russians purchased rights to the Ross vicinity from a local chief, Pana-cuc-cux, for three blankets, three pairs of trousers, two axes, three hoes, and some beads,<sup>23</sup> although Kyrill Khlebnikov noted that the Pomo village at Ross was called Mad-shui-nui, and that the chief who ceded it to the Russians was named Chu-chu-san.<sup>24</sup> The Pomo apparently assisted the Russians by furnishing materials and helping to erect the buildings.<sup>25</sup> A somewhat contradictory observation was made by Kuskov, who noted that "in the beginning they [the Kashaya] came to us very often, and seemingly remained very content with the intercourse, but from the time the fort was built, they appeared very seldom, especially the men."<sup>26</sup> In 1817, Lieutenant Captain Leontii Hagemeister visited Ross in order to extend and formalize the agreement with the Pomo.<sup>27</sup> A number of prominent Pomo and Coast Miwok headmen, including the chiefs Chu-chu-san and Vale-lie-lie, met with Hagemeister and agreed to the Russian's request for a formal agreement.<sup>28</sup> The arrangement that resulted from this effort represents one of the few official treaties ever made by a Euro-American power with a California Indian tribe.<sup>29</sup> In 1825, Governor Muravyov visited Ross and met with Mannel, a local Pomo chief, in order to reconfirm the Russian treaty.<sup>30</sup>

The Russians also arranged an agreement with the Bodega Miwok in order to develop Port Rummyantsev on Bodega Bay. Rights to Bodega Bay were purchased from the Bodega chief, lollo, for an Italian-style cape, a coat, trousers, shirts, arms, three hatchets, five hoes, three files, sugar, and beads.<sup>31</sup>

Apparently, the local Native Americans preferred Russian settlement of their traditional territories as protection against Spanish incursions and attacks by interior tribes loyal to the Spanish.<sup>32</sup> It is unlikely, however, that they ever intended to cede complete ownership of the land to the Russians. Among the Pomo, certain resource areas were communally owned and "open to all comers regardless of tribal connections."<sup>33</sup> Thus, it is more likely that the Kashaya intended to give the Russians access to the area, but not the land itself. The legality of the agreement was questioned by Friedrich Luetke when he visited Ross in 1818:

Mr. Kuskov has concluded a pact with the chief of the Indians who live nearby. The latter has thereby ceded all the land they occupy to the Russian emperor's possession, and he subjects himself and his subjects to the imperial government. Mr. Hagemeister asked our captain to take this document back with him and, upon arrival in Russia, deliver it to its proper destination. But a pact with an illiterate man who doesn't know the language and lacks the slightest conception of what the agreement is all about can only serve for fault-finding, and not as a fundamental right and it will probably be of service to no one.<sup>34</sup>

Upon the establishment of Ross, intermarriages among Russian and native Alaskan men with Kashaya and Bodega women became commonplace. On visiting Ross in 1818, Vasili Golovnin noted that "these Indians willingly give their daughters in marriage to the Russians and Aleuts, and there are many Indian wives in Fort Ross. This establishes not only friendly but family ties."<sup>35</sup> Historian Robert Jackson has described the marriage of one Andres Aulancoca, a Kodiak Aleut, with Talia Unuttaca, a Coast Miwok woman.<sup>36</sup> By 1821, there were at least 48 local Indian women living with Russian, Creole (the term used by the Russians to denote individuals of Russian and native Alaskan parentage<sup>37</sup>), and native Alaskan men at Ross.<sup>38</sup> Whereas 26 of these women were Kashaya from the vicinity of Ross, the others appear to have been 10 Southern Pomo from the Russian River area, one Central Pomo from Point Arena, and 11 Coast Miwok from Bodega Bay.<sup>39</sup> While several of the local women were cohabiting with Russian and Creole men, most were involved with native Alaskans. Some of the women were mistreated by their Russian and Alaskan husbands, but the Russian authorities saw to it that the men were punished with severe floggings.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the women were seemingly viewed by the authorities as an integral part of the community. As such, they were subjected to the same administrative control that affected their husbands. For example, in the Kuskov censuses of 1820–1821, behind the names of several women who had departed the settlement after a husband's death or divorce, it is noted that each had been "released" or "allowed to go to her native place."<sup>41</sup> The local women who settled at Ross were visited by their families, who in turn helped supply the colonists with food and much-needed labor. Tikhmenev observed that "the friendly relations existing between the natives and the Russians, soon resulted in the establishment of family ties between the former and many of the Aleuts brought



over by the Russians, so that many of them did not limit themselves to ordinary visits of their new relations but were coming to aid them voluntarily in their work."<sup>42</sup>

Archaeological studies conducted within the vicinity of Ross suggest that a major shift took place in the location of Kashaya villages after the arrival of the Russians, with residential sites being relocated closer to the settlement so as to maximize exchange.<sup>43</sup> Schabelski noted in his 1826 visit to Ross that "the smallest services which they [the local Indians] rendered to the Russians were generously recompensed."<sup>44</sup> While visiting the colony in 1824, Von Kotzebue observed that "the inhabitants of Ross live in the greatest concord with the Indians, who repair, in considerable numbers, to the fortress, and work as day-labourers, for wages. At night, they usually remain outside the palisades."<sup>45</sup>

While Bancroft notes that an attack was made on Ross by a "Sotoyome" (i.e., Satiyomi) chief shortly after the founding of the settlement, there appears to be no other account of an attack made on the settlement, other than incidents of attacks on livestock and property damage in later years.<sup>46</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that in 1820 and 1821, there were a number of local Native Americans detained at Ross for crimes against the settlement. Three Pomo men were sentenced to work at Ross for having killed three of the settlement's best horses.<sup>47</sup> In addition, four Coast Miwok men from Bodega Bay were sentenced to labor at Ross for having murdered native Alaskans, and a fifth Bodega man was working at the Russians' station in the Farallon Islands for the same crime.<sup>48</sup> Three of the men (a Pomo and two of the Miwok) were sent to Sitka on the *Buldakov* in 1820. It is unclear whether they were ever returned to California. Two of the other prisoners were released, one due to old age, and the other after having proven his innocence.

Horses were attacked twice and killed in 1832 by the relatives of an Indian woman slain while in the employment of the Russian-American Company.<sup>49</sup> The woman and her husband were killed while standing guard in the field. A native Alaskan was suspected of having participated in the murders, and it was this fact that apparently resulted in the revenge attacks on the colony's horse herds. Peter Kostromitinov, manager of Ross Colony, jailed one of the alleged horse-killers and sought to capture the chief he held responsible for the attacks.

The incarceration of local Native Americans by the

Russians for the acts of murder and property damage in 1820, 1821, and 1832 strongly suggests an ongoing, if initially subdued, current of resistance to the Russian presence at Ross.<sup>50</sup> Whereas attacks on individual native Alaskans may have been the result of personal grievances, attacks on the colony's horse herds suggest increasing political actions against the Russian-American Company itself.

Although the Russians had the cooperation of the local Pomo and Coast Miwok chiefs, in reality, these leaders spoke for only the members of their own kin groups and did not represent all the native people of the Ross vicinity. The Kashaya did not adopt the idea of a single chief until after Russian contact, probably indicating "evidence of the effect of the Russian centralization of authority."<sup>51</sup> In Alaska, the Russians often appointed influential men as chiefs, and it is possible that this was the case at Ross and Bodega Bay as well.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, Tikhmenev noted, "during the course of the winter [1811–1812], he [Kuskov] became acquainted with some of the most prominent native inhabitants, and after distributing among them medals and presents, he persuaded them to voluntary cession of the land necessary for the settlement."<sup>53</sup> These "prominent" individuals, while almost certainly the headmen of local kin groups, would not have had the moral or political authority to cede the surrounding land to the Russians. Instead, they could have offered to share the land with the Russians by way of a lease. It should be noted, however, that the archaeological evidence suggests that "the decision-making process concerning participation in Ross mercantile activities took place at the level of individual families and small groups of native Californians."<sup>54</sup> Thus, even though they signed a treaty with the Russians, the chiefs could not guarantee total peace in their homeland.

It is probable that the acts of resistance were launched by Native California traditionalists as a response to fears of cultural domination by the European powers and the cultural and psychological deprivation that accompanied such domination. Furthermore, the attackers almost certainly included runaways from Mission San Rafael striking back against the Europeans who had deprived them of their lands and freedom.<sup>55</sup> According to an 1832 report, Colony Ross was the potential target of a large-scale uprising inspired by the runaways:

The Manager of the Office reports also that at the end of April of the current year, Spanish soldiers arrived to the Ross with a report that half of the Indi-

Living History Day at Fort Ross, 1991, with the cannon crew relaxing during other events. The reenactment of military activities at the fort, including the militia's drill exercises before visiting Mexican officials, is a popular aspect of public programs at the park. It suggests the Russians' determination to resist Mexican authority, which would have preferred barring the colonists from settlement. Photograph by E. Breck Parkman.



ans in the Mission of San Rafael had incited the working Indians, during the day when the soldiers were absent; they attacked the Mission, robbed it and departed to the mountains. The Missionary Padre Juan Amoroza escaped to Port of San Francisco to request the help. In the mean time, the soldiers together with other half of Indians pursued the rebels and opened the rifle fire while rebels were shooting the arrows and threw stones, and both sides suffered in dead and wounded.

Although steps were taken subsequently to pursue the rebels, the efforts of the soldiers and Mission's Indians were in vain—because the rebels combined with other Indians in one location collected over 1000 Indians. All the threats of poorly armed soldiers met with ridicule.

Pretty soon the news of this event spread through all areas and made an impression on our Indians. They say that if Spaniards could make them no harm, the Russians are even less capable, presuming that the meek treatment of them is cowardice.

Many of the escaped converted Spanish-Indians started to visit Indians living close to the settlement Ross telling them that they want to assemble a large number and once more rob both Missions on this side and to kill all living there and then to try their luck and to do the same to Russians.<sup>56</sup>

Much of the Native American hostility and resistance to the Russians arose out of the methods by which the indigenous people were made to work at Ross. The agrarian practices utilized there were labor intensive, and neither the Russians, Creoles, native Alaskans, nor local Native Americans were enthusiastic about working the land.<sup>57</sup> As agricultural activity expanded in the 1820s, the colonists began to require increasingly more local native labor. With the founding of the Chernykh, Khlebnikov, and Kostromitinov ranchos (i.e., farms) in the early 1830s, much more labor was required. By 1838, there were more than 250 Pomo laborers stationed at the Kostromitinov Rancho alone.<sup>58</sup> Whereas local Indian workers had come voluntarily to Ross in the initial years of the settlement, they had to be physically coerced into working the agricultural fields and bringing in the harvest in subsequent years. José Figueroa visited the Kostromitinov Rancho on August 23, 1834. "At the time they were harvesting," he observed in his diary, "and they were using, for labor, besides the settlers, some Indians from the villages whom they brought usually by force."<sup>59</sup> If the harvest failed, the Indian workers were held responsible, and forced to stay at Ross in order to work off the debt of the



lost crops.<sup>60</sup> Naturally, it became increasingly difficult to arrange for Indian labor.

By the early 1830s, the relations between the colonists and the Indians appear to have broken down. Whereas the local natives had at first turned to the Russians for protection from the Spanish who took them captive and "make them work like cattle in the fields," the Russians now did the same.<sup>61</sup> In 1834, Wrangel reported that at times as many as 150 Indian workers were rounded up and forced to work in the fields for one and one-half months without rest.<sup>62</sup> He described one particularly desperate venture in which an attack was made on the interior plains 43 miles inland from the settlement, and 75 men, women, and children were brought to Ross with their hands tied, driven like cattle to work the fields.<sup>63</sup> The Indians fought back, mounting guerrilla attacks against Russian-American Company property. In 1833, Vallejo was informed that the Russians were sometimes "very harsh" with the local Indians in order to harvest their crops.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, the report to Vallejo noted that:

The commander and his subordinates are very disgusted with the Indians who have left their posts on the nearby rancherias. The Russians have killed a few who were seen some distance away from Ross and had stolen a considerable amount of wheat. In extreme exasperation the commander said to me that if my orders included hostilities against the natives, that he personally with 30 of his men would assist me in tracking down and attacking them.<sup>65</sup>

The commander's offer was turned down, and apparently no attack was made on the guerrilla forces. However, Indian attacks did continue at Ross and elsewhere in the northern San Francisco Bay area. Indeed, many of the Pomo, especially the Satiyomis of the interior, waged a series of wars against Mariano Vallejo's forces from 1834 to 1843.<sup>66</sup> It is probable that many of the attacks against the Russian colony were undertaken by the Satiyomis and their allies.<sup>67</sup> In addition to destroying standing wheat in the Russian fields, the Indians stole livestock, killing as many as 100 head of cattle in 1838 alone.<sup>68</sup> To make matters worse, the colony's agricultural pursuits were relatively unproductive, requiring the purchase of much of the food exported to Alaska.<sup>69</sup> Wheat and other foodstuffs were purchased from the Sonoma Mission and from at least one local Indian chief, Camillo Ynitia of Olompali, a Coast Miwok village located on the road from Mission San Rafael to Ross settlement.<sup>70</sup> Thus, given the strain on the

colony's agricultural operations, the loss of Russian produce through theft and vandalism would have exasperated an already serious situation.

It is clear that by the time the Russians abandoned Colony Ross in 1841, their good relations with many of the surrounding Indian tribes had deteriorated significantly. This was in part due to their harsh measures for obtaining Indian laborers, but it may also have been a result of increasing pressure on the local native people by the encroachment of Mariano Vallejo and other Californios. Nevertheless, relations between Russians and those Kashaya Pomo and Bodega Miwok who had intermarried with colonists remained positive. When the colonists departed Ross in 1841, a number of their Indian wives and children accompanied them to Alaska. The Indians who remained at Ross were probably as grief-stricken by the Russian departure as were the native Alaskans upon the Russian abandonment of Alaska in 1867.<sup>71</sup> Even today, the Kashaya language is characterized by Russian and native Alaskan words learned during Russian times,<sup>72</sup> and the Ross colonists are remembered in a positive manner by many of the Kashaya people.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, these people remain genuinely interested in their Russian and Alaskan connections.<sup>74</sup>

In the years immediately following the Russian abandonment of Ross, the local Kashaya were left with relatively little defense from attack. In 1841, following the Russian departure but before John Sutter took possession of the settlement's movable property, the local Pomo were attacked by a band of American settlers in Mexican-controlled territory. A local folktale describes how the Pomo survived the attack by securing themselves within the walls of the former Russian compound, then slipping away into the hills after darkness set in.<sup>75</sup> In 1845, the so-called "Castro and Garcia Raid" captured more than 200 of the Kashaya to be used as laborers on Californio ranches.<sup>76</sup> By the 1870s, the Kashaya had been forced out of the Ross area by American ranchers.

#### SPANISH AND MEXICAN REACTION TO COLONY ROSS

Like that of the Native Americans, Spanish reaction to Colony Ross was mixed. In October 1812, shortly after the founding of the settlement, an officer and seven soldiers from the Presidio of San Francisco appeared at Ross and investigated the premises.<sup>77</sup> The Russians explained the purpose of their settlement and requested a trade arrangement with the Spanish. The officer returned to Ross the

following year and announced that Governor Don José Joaquín de Arillaga would permit trade to be conducted, but under certain restrictions. With the death of Arillaga, however, Spanish resistance to Colony Ross became more vocal, with strong appeals that the Russians withdraw from their settlement. When the Russians politely refused to comply, the Spanish founded Mission San Rafael Arcangel in the north bay in 1817 in an effort to halt Russian expansion.

Following their independence from Spain, the Mexican authorities immediately called for the abandonment of Colony Ross. In 1822, they issued an urgent demand that Ross settlement be destroyed within six months.<sup>78</sup> Once again, the Russians politely refused to comply with such a demand. As was the case with the Spanish, the Mexican authorities continued to press the issue on diplomatic levels, and did not, or could not, resort to military action. In a further attempt to contain the Russians, Mission San Francisco Solano was founded in 1823 on the site of what would become the town of Sonoma. In 1832, the Mexican authorities resorted

to a new tactic aimed at halting Russian expansion south of Ross. California Governor Figueroa was directed to implement the colonization laws of 1824 and 1828, making it easier for foreigners to acquire land, and to facilitate the creation of new communities north of San Francisco to block Russian expansion southward.<sup>79</sup> These measures, and internal conditions at Ross, eventually resulted in the dismantling of the colony. Unable to raise enough food to feed their Alaskan colonies, and unable to expand to more favorable lands, the Russians were forced to abandon Ross, selling its movable property to Captain John Sutter in 1841.

#### FORT ROSS OR ROSS SETTLEMENT?

When Ivan Kuskov founded Ross settlement in 1812, he probably did so with the memory of the Tlingit's 1802 destruction of New Archangel on his mind.<sup>80</sup> Although he had arranged an agreement with the local Kashaya Pomo, Kuskov undoubtedly felt apprehensive about relations with the surrounding Indian tribes. Thus, Kuskov founded a fortified settlement typical of the traditional Russian



Fort Ross, 1997. Photo by Daniel F. Murley.



American Company outposts. However, it is important to remember that many structures and most of the colonists were located outside the palisaded compound. Indeed, there were about fifty buildings outside the stockade in 1841.<sup>81</sup> Three separate residential areas were situated outside the stockade, one each for the working-class Russians (and Creoles), native Alaskans, and local Native Americans.<sup>82</sup> The fortified enclosure was constructed to protect company assets, and to provide a defensive position should the settlement be attacked. As the years progressed, the actual Ross settlement grew well beyond the fortified compound and in many ways, obscured it.

The Russians occasionally referred to their establishment at Ross as a *krepost* ("fort").<sup>83</sup> However, it was most often called "Selenie Ross" (Settlement Ross) or "Koloniia Ross" (Colony Ross).<sup>84</sup> For example, Ilia Gavrilovich Voznesenskii titled his famous 1841 painting of the settlement, "Ross Settlement."<sup>85</sup> Yegor Chernykh, the agronomist, also referred to Ross as "Ross Settlement."<sup>86</sup>

If the Russians underplayed the fortifications at Ross, the Spanish did not. In all likelihood, Settlement Ross first became "Fort Ross" when the Spanish military delegation from the Presidio of San Francisco visited and inspected it in October of 1812. The fortifications at Ross would have appeared impressive to the Spanish soldiers. The Spanish presidios, including those at Monterey and San Francisco, were notoriously antiquated and under-manned and could not have withstood an attack by artillery.<sup>87</sup> When Schabelski visited the Monterey and San Francisco presidios in 1822, he noted that "the forts, built both at San Francisco and Monterey, fallen into disrepair, are supplied with cannons on decrepit, old gun carriages which break at the first discharge of the cannon. I noticed in San Francisco such a one which dated from the year 1740. In visiting Monterey, I found only one soldier, asleep."<sup>88</sup> On one occasion, the San Francisco Presidio had to borrow powder from a visiting Russian ship in order to fire a proper cannon salute from their only functioning gun.<sup>89</sup> Upon seeing the well-fortified enclosure at Ross, and the organized and well-disciplined civil defense, it is not surprising that the Spanish dubbed the settlement "Presidio de Ross."<sup>90</sup> In 1818, when Spain's foreign minister, Cea Bermudez, demanded that the Russians dismantle the Ross settlement, he referred to the establishment as a "fortress."<sup>91</sup> The Russians replied that what he had considered a fortress was

actually "an area surrounded by a fence" and that "the guns there were mainly ornamental and provided an inadequate defence against an enemy."<sup>92</sup>

When, following independence from Spain, Mexican authorities in California continued the effort to force the removal of Colony Ross, they, too, perceived the settlement as a fort. Father Mariano Payeras, visiting Ross in 1822, identified it as the "Russian fort."<sup>93</sup> Similar reference was made in an 1833 report to Mariano Vallejo.<sup>94</sup> Exasperated by the situation with the Mexican authorities, or perhaps disturbed by the deteriorating condition of the fortifications, Ferdinand von Wrangel termed Ross "this so-called fortress" during his 1833 visit.<sup>95</sup> When the first Americans began arriving in the area, they took a lead from the Californios, and continued to speak of the Russian outpost as "Fort Ross."<sup>96</sup> The name stuck, and remains with us today.

#### INTERPRETATION AND SEMANTICS AT FORT ROSS STATE HISTORIC PARK

Ross settlement has traditionally been interpreted as little more than a fort at Fort Ross State Historic Park. This is partly a result of the name given to the park, and a result of a somewhat incorrect or incomplete perspective of Russian California by Americans. It might also be conjectured that, in some unconscious way, the situation was aggravated by the long Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union. However, the situation has likely arisen primarily as a result of reconstruction scheduling. To date, all reconstructions at the park have occurred within the fortified enclosure. Since becoming a park in 1906, the palisades have been rebuilt, and inside them have been reconstructed the northwest and southeast blockhouses, the chapel, the Kuskov house, the Rotchev house, and the officials quarters. Three structures remain to be rebuilt inside the compound: the warehouse, storehouse, and barracks. Although many of the Russian-era structures were situated outside the walls of the compound, there are currently no plans to reconstruct any of them. Instead, as public funds are made available, plans are to continue reconstructing the compound structures. At the same time, the park has been slowly acquiring cannon with which to fortify the enclosure. This has resulted in a less-than-desirable perspective on the actual, historic Ross settlement. One potential problem is that visitors to the park are given the wrong impression of the former Russian settlement, and thus a false sense of history.



Park officials and staff members at Fort Ross associate in various ways with the international community. Members of Russia's anthropological and scientific communities, as well as government officials, have visited the site and participated in numerous events, often as a part of Living History Day. On July 18, 1994, Russian Senator Vladimir Schmeiko, left, and an aide received a historic Russian flag and fired the cannon. Photograph by Diane Askew, courtesy of the author.

Without the benefit of the numerous residential, industrial, and agricultural structures that would have crowded the landscape outside the palisades, the reconstructed compound resembles more that of a Fort Apache or Fort Defiance of Hollywood movie fame, than the settlement that was actually there. This has led the Reverend Vladimir Derugin, of the Russian Orthodox Church, to remark:

... it has now become clear to all who care to see, that Fort Ross was never a "fort." Yet on the spot interpretation and presentation continues to promote this fairy tale so close to our John Wayne, Rin Tin Tin, Rambo fascination. It would be justified to conjecture that cannons at Ross had indeed been fired, but only as salutes to incoming ships, to the raising of

the flag or maybe to honor the deceased. Such firing would be perfectly appropriate as long as their proper, peaceful historical nature was clearly depicted. It is almost as if Fort Ross would cease to be interesting and marketable to tourists if its true, peaceful past was presented and stressed, almost as if peace, human success and progress, and the common good are too boring. Yet that is exactly what Ft. Ross was all about: agricultural work, scientific research and expeditions, merchant shipbuilding, and most of all social cooperation governed by values such as freedom and non-violence.<sup>97</sup>

Rev. Derugin goes on to say that the park's cannon appear to be so overemphasized that it is as if they were the main attraction and symbol of Fort Ross.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, for a number of years now, it has been a tradition at Fort Ross State Historic Park to have visiting dignitaries fire the cannon as a salute. In recent years, various dignitaries, such as Dr. Igor Dubov, director of the former Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) Ethnographic Museum, Father Innocent Veniaminov, namesake and great-great-grandson of Bishop Veniaminov, and, most recently, Senator Vladimir Filippovich Schmeiko, Speaker of Russia's Upper House of Parliament, have fired the cannon at Ross.<sup>99</sup> Of course, there is nothing wrong with this. The firing of the cannon to salute visitors appears to have been a tradition of the Russian colonists at Ross. For example, a one-gun salute was fired in honor of the chiefs departing Ross after signing the 1817 treaty.<sup>100</sup> When Don Augustin Fernandez de San Vicente and Father Mariano Payeras visited Ross in 1822, they were welcomed with a four-gun salute.<sup>101</sup> However, it was not always possible to give the traditional salute. For example, when Mikhail Petrovich Lazarev visited Ross in 1822, his ship's seven-gun salute was not answered due to a shortage of powder and shot.<sup>102</sup>

Living History Day, a one-day interpretive event held each summer at Fort Ross, is tremendously popular with park visitors. Several thousand people attend this event every year. On this day, dozens of dedicated park staff and volunteers come dressed in period costume, and during the course of the day, recreate daily life at Ross settlement. Included in the activities are traditional crafts such as candle-making and weaving, blacksmithing, cooking, folk dancing, and singing, as well as musket and cannon drills. The drills are conducted as part of a dramatic reenactment of a Mexican military delegation visiting Ross in order to trade. The firing of the guns is popular with visitors and participants alike, perhaps



because of the sound and smoke produced by the firing. Living History Day would suffer without these drills.

The attention paid by the park to the cannon and military-style drills, however, can be confusing. When the staff of the Leningrad Ethnographic Museum visited the park in 1990,<sup>103</sup> prior to the breakup of the Soviet Union, Head Curator Elena Tsarva declined a request to fire a cannon, stating, "but we [Russians] are a peaceful people!" It was apparent that she misunderstood the intent of the cannon salute, and perhaps viewed it as an American exaggeration of Soviet military aggression. Indeed, it is possible that the park is creating more of a "fort" than history will support.<sup>104</sup> By recreating the fortified enclosure, and nothing more, a false sense of defensive urgency is created.<sup>105</sup> This in turn has affected the way in which the Ross settlement is interpreted, as the following example will illustrate.

When Wrangel described Ross settlement in 1833, he referred to the fortified enclosure as a "so-called fortress."<sup>106</sup> However, when this same description appears in the park's official booklet on Ross, the words "so-called" are dropped, thus altering the meaning of Wrangel's statement.<sup>107</sup> Wrangel was either reacting to the Californios' insistence that Ross settlement was a fortress, or noting the unsatisfactory condition of the settlement's fortifications. Either way, his statement seemingly implies his belief that the Ross fortifications were inadequate to be called a "fortress." Wrangel wrote that, "at two diagonally opposite corners in connection with the palisade have been erected two watchtowers with cannons defending all sides of this so-called fortress."<sup>108</sup> In the park booklet, however, this same description appears as, "at two diagonally opposite corners in connection with the palisades have been erected two watchtowers with cannons defending all sides of this. . . . fortress."<sup>109</sup> Thus, a clearer image of a fortress is deliberately created in the minds of the public.

Another example of the interpretive dilemma might be found in a 1987–1988 debate concerning the placement of cannon in the stockade walls at Fort Ross. At the time, the walls were being replaced due to their deterioration. During a wall restoration project in the 1950s, a rather enigmatic archaeological feature was discovered adjacent to the western wall. At the time of its discovery, it was hypothesized that the feature *might* represent a gun platform, although other interpretations were possible. In 1987, as the

western wall was being rebuilt, a number of state park scholars argued for the installation of gun platforms based on the enigmatic 1950s "discovery." This would have required the cutting of portholes in the walls, through which the cannon could be fired. Other state park scholars, including the historian who had made the original archaeological discovery, as well as Dr. Svetlana G. Fedorova, a Russian America expert from the former Soviet Union, argued against the proposal. They pointed out: (1) the archaeological evidence did not support such a proposal; (2) the historic record did not support the use of guns in the walls; and (3) that such emplacements would have been unnecessary since the blockhouses were constructed to allow for firing along the walls. "I am really surprised that at the time our leaders are conducting a successful dialog about disarmament," Dr. Fedorova noted, "in California there is an attempt being made to picture Ft. Ross as an impregnable fortress. Ft. Ross was never such a fortress."<sup>110</sup>

The guns were not placed in the walls, but the debate did reveal how a preoccupation with the defensive aspects of Ross settlement could affect the way in which the site is interpreted to the public. Quite probably, this preoccupation stems from the fact that only the fortified enclosure of a much larger and more complex settlement has been reconstructed and interpreted.<sup>111</sup>

#### NEW DIRECTIONS AT FORT ROSS STATE HISTORIC PARK

Two projects are currently underway that will modify the manner and direction of public interpretation at Fort Ross State Historic Park. The Fort Ross Archaeological Project, under the direction of Professor Kent Lightfoot of the University of California, Berkeley, is a multi-year research program begun in 1988, which is examining various aspects of the exchanges among Russians, native Alaskans, and Native Californians at Colony Ross.<sup>112</sup> The purpose of this project "is to examine the nature, extent, and direction of cultural change among native workers in a pluralistic, hierarchically structured mercantile colony."<sup>113</sup> A number of public agencies and institutions are participating in the project, including the University of California, Berkeley, Sonoma State University, Santa Rosa Junior College, the Sakalin (Russia) Regional Museum, the Kodiak (Alaska) Area Native Association, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Russian Orthodox priest Fr. Innocent Veniaminov, right, was photographed with Fr. Metropolitan Theodosius, center, and a third priest during a visit to Ross in June 1989. Photograph by E. Breck Parkman.



As part of their project, Berkeley archaeologists conducted a complete survey of the park in 1988 and 1989. Thirty archaeological sites were recorded, dating from the lower archaic period (ca. 6000–3000 B.C.) to the historic period (A.D. 1812–present).<sup>114</sup> Currently, work is underway to investigate the native Alaskan residential area at Ross. During the 1992–1993 field seasons, two extensive activity areas (“bone beds”) were exposed, and partial evidence of a nearby structure was revealed.

A second project underway at Fort Ross State Historic Park entails the restoration of the historic cemetery, in which are buried those Orthodox Christians who died during the Russian occupation of Ross settlement.<sup>115</sup> The Fort Ross Cemetery Restoration Project is being conducted by the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, under the direction of Professor Lynne Goldstein and doctoral candidate Sannie Osborn. Goldstein and Osborn recently completed a three-year

project to relocate and identify the gravesites and features of the cemetery.<sup>116</sup> This project was conducted in cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church in America, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, the Kodiak Area Native Association, the Sonoma County Coroner’s Office, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation.<sup>117</sup>

Archival research has been an integral part of the project. To date, records have been found of at least 69 deaths at Ross.<sup>118</sup> The records attest to the dangers of life in the colony. In Professor Goldstein’s words,

In several instances, we know the names and occupations of the deceased individuals, while in other cases we do not even know their ethnic affiliation. The records suggest that disease was common, and that occasionally the colony was hit hard: in 1828, a dysentery epidemic killed one Creole male three Creole females, 17 Aleut males, and 8 Aleut



females in a three-week period. Smallpox killed several individuals, and accidents or drownings killed others.<sup>119</sup>

During the course of the excavations, Goldstein relocated 143 gravesites, more than twice the number originally anticipated. Due to the acidic nature of the soil, the human remains were very fragmentary. However, through the work of Dr. Douglas Owsley and a crew of forensic anthropologists from the Smithsonian Institution, the on-site analysis of the remains has shed important light on the ethnicity of those interred there. The unexpected remains of numerous women and children were encountered throughout the cemetery, revealing the colonial nature of the settlement. Also unexpected were the many artifacts recovered from the gravesites. Professor Goldstein discovered thousands of glass trade beads in some of the graves, and none in others. The beads, which came primarily from present-day Czechoslovakia, Venice, and China, found their way to Ross through trade.<sup>120</sup> Also found were numerous buttons, medallions, and crosses. Among the most important discoveries were small fragments of cloth:

Most individuals were apparently wrapped in shrouds; metal in the grave, whether in the form of crosses or other items, often preserves a section of this fabric. Most of the fabric is linen, however, in several instances we have portions of jackets and coats, including linings. This will provide information on clothing types, colors and fabrics, and will also help in the identification of status differentiation.<sup>121</sup>

Following the archaeological examination of the gravesites, the human remains were reinterred with Last Rites by the Orthodox Church.<sup>122</sup> Recently, as part of the restoration of the cemetery, Rev. Alexander Krass-ovsky and church members marked each gravesite with a Russian Orthodox cross.<sup>123</sup>

As a result of the insights gained from such archaeological projects, a better understanding will be possible of the day-to-day life of the inhabitants of Colony Ross. Special attention is being paid to the role played by the native Alaskan and native Californian workers at Ross.<sup>124</sup> Attention is also being directed toward a better understanding of the Russian and Creole colonists, especially the women and children. Finally, the archaeological manifestations of the inter-ethnic exchange at Ross settlement are of utmost importance to the current research, the results of which are being shared with the public in an active interpretive program.<sup>125</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

It appears that Ross settlement was no more a "fort" than was New Archangel (Sitka). Certainly, Ross was a fortified settlement, especially at first, but the settlement expanded beyond the walled enclosure. However, whereas the Russians viewed Ross as a settlement, their Spanish and Mexican neighbors perceived it to be a fort. Beginning as early as 1812, Ross settlement became known to Hispanic rivals as the "Presidio de Ross." The first Americans to arrive in the area continued that tradition, calling the Russian outpost "Fort Ross." That name, along with its connotations, has remained with us to the present day, and may in some way account for the way in which the settlement has been perceived, reconstructed, and interpreted. Whereas it may not be possible, or even desirable, to alter the name of Fort Ross State Historic Park, it is possible, through on-site interpretation, to change the public's perception of Ross settlement to reflect more accurately its relatively peaceful and colonial nature. CHS

*See notes beginning on page 387.*

*E. Breck Parkman is a state archaeologist with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, a research associate at the University of California, Berkeley, and president of the Society for California Archaeology. He earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees in anthropology from California State University, Hayward, and has published more than 50 scientific articles in the U.S., Canada, England, South Africa, and Australia. Parkman is the director of the "Global Village" project, a multi-year educational undertaking that enables elementary schools throughout California, Alaska, and Russia to participate in historic and archaeological research at Fort Ross.*



Here, park visitors, numbering more than three hundred thousand annually, head downhill to the shore to welcome the reconstructed schooner *California* during Living History Day, 1990. For the past several years, the ship has made the one-day voyage to Ft. Ross, bringing passengers from San Francisco to the Living History celebration. *Photograph by E. Breck Parkman.*





An image symbolic of discrimination barriers that both Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans have faced for more than a century, these undocumented immigrants and dozens of others were jailed at Indio, California, in the summer of 1951, crowded into a single cell where temperatures soared to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. *Hearst Collection, Los Angeles Examiner, USC Special Collections.*

*Edited by James J. Rawls*

*The California-Mexico Connection.*

Edited by Abraham F. Lowenthal and Katrina Burgess. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993, xxi, 363 pp., \$45.00 cloth, \$16.95 paper.)

*Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Labor, 1900–1939.*

By Camille Guerin-Gonzales. (New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press, 1994, xi, 197 pp., \$42.00 cloth, \$15.00 paper.)

*Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s.*

By Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995, ix, 283 pp., \$39.95 cloth, \$17.50 paper.)

*Reviewed by Manuel G. Gonzales, instructor of history at Diablo Valley College and author of The Hispanic Elite of the Southwest.*

Mexican immigration to the United States is the common thread uniting these three volumes; however, only *The California-Mexico Connection* attempts to place this theme in a broader context.

The Lowenthal-Burgess volume consists of fourteen essays by Mexican and American scholars who came together in a 1991 symposium to explore the ever-expanding links between California and its southern neighbor. The editors claim that this volume is the first in any language to explore the "California-Mexico Connection," a phrase coined to describe the "tangle of overlapping interests and incomplete sovereignties" (p. ix) between the two geographic areas, and to assess its effects. On the whole, the authors of this collection tend to be optimistic about the future of the relationship. One exception to the rule, however, is Mexican political scientist Jorge G. Castañeda, who is critical of the neoliberal economic policies of the ruling elite and the corruption that permeates Mexican political life. Only Castañeda gives the reader any hint of the vast economic and political crisis that erupted in Mexico in 1994.

Given that this work is a symposium volume, the chapters are remarkably uniform in maintaining a high level of excellence. Particularly informative is the chapter on immigration, "The Mexican Diaspora in California," by Carlos González-Gutiérrez, who does an outstanding job of demonstrating changing immigration patterns; more and more, women have joined the exodus, as have Indians, a barometer of the deteriorating socio-economic conditions plaguing Mexico after 1981–82. Though flawed by a failure to deal with recent Mexican demographic trends, this chapter is the best brief explanation of contemporary Mexican immigration to the United States available at present.

Camille Guerin-Gonzales, associate professor of history at Oberlin College and author of *Mexican Workers and American Dreams*, is only the second Chicana historian to publish a book-length manuscript on the history of Mexicans in the United States. More specifically, she traces the mass exodus of Mexicans into California's agricultural valleys in search of the American Dream after 1900 and the disillusionment occasioned by their repatriation in the 1930s.

In arguing that Mexican immigrants were not "birds of passage" (temporary sojourners)—as restrictionists portrayed them in a largely successful effort to deny them their civil rights—the author neglects the fact that many if not most of these immigrants before the Second World War hoped to return to Mexico one day. Moreover, while she correctly asserts that Anglo Americans popularly viewed Mexicans as outsiders during this period, this image was also pervasive within the ethnic community; even as late as the 1940s and 1950s, Mexican-Americans still took pride in referring to themselves as *mexicanos*, in contrast to Anglos, whom they called *americanos*. Undoubtedly this identification was in part a product of rejection by the host society, but the sentimental ties that bound Mexicans to the Old Country should not be underestimated.

These criticisms notwithstanding, Professor Guerin-Gonzales has made a valuable contribution to the growing body of scholarly studies of Mexican-American labor in the Southwest. *Mexican Workers and American Dreams* has many strengths. Among them are its detailed descriptions of the miserable living conditions of Mexican workers in the 1920s, leaning heavily on the studies of Paul Taylor, and its equally thorough treatment, based on Mexican sources, of the fate of *repatriados* upon their return to Mexico—the first subject inadequately studied and the second totally neglected up to now. Finally, the study is very readable, as Guerin-Gonzales does a creditable job of avoiding the social science jargon that has seduced so many ethnic studies professors recently, an affectation that has created a serious barrier between these scholars and (especially) their Latino and Latina audiences.

The anti-immigrant mood of the 1990s is also reflected in a second important study of Mexican repatriation in the 1930s, *Decade of Betrayal*. Combining extensive archival research in Mexico and the United States with oral history testimony, authors Francisco Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez cover the same ground as Guerin-Gonzales, and they arrive at pretty much the same conclusion: that the reward for the Mexican contribution to American economic development was a racist policy that made a mockery of the American Dream. Both volumes look at what happens to *repatriados*, men and women alike, once they return to Mexico, a perspective hitherto neglected, as previously

Books sent to *California History* for review that are not reviewed, but pertain to the collection, are catalogued in the California Historical Society library.



mentioned. There is one major difference between the two works: whereas Guerin-Gonzales focuses on the Golden State, Balderrama and Rodríguez look at Mexican repatriation from a national perspective.

I was impressed by the scope of *Decade of Betrayal*. The authors do a marvelous job of demonstrating that by the 1930s Mexicans were a national group, not simply a regional minority confined to the Southwest. A few were even found in Alaska, working in the fishing industry, a little known fact the authors do well to bring to light, though regrettably they are unable to do much more than mention it. My only serious criticism of this fine study, however, is the contention that "it is reasonable to estimate that the total number of repatriates was approximately one million" (pp. 121-22), a much higher figure than that provided by other scholars, notably Abraham Hoffman, who insists on a figure half that size.

## *A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton.*

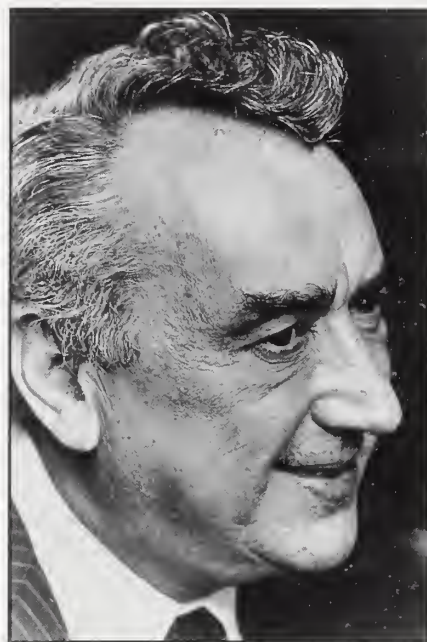
By John Jacobs. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, xxvii, 578 pp., \$34.95 cloth.)

Reviewed by Mary Ellen Leary, author of *Phantom Politics: Campaigning in California*.

Phillip Burton is a name that dominated Democratic politics in California and in Congress from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, but is known today mainly for his championship of the magnificent Golden Gate National Recreation Area that insures preservation of so much fine coastline and the threatened San Francisco Presidio. The park is an oddly gentle memorial to a tempestuous and driven career that crashed its way through public life hell-bent on succoring those in need.

In his richly detailed, fast-paced, and captivating biography of Burton, *A Rage for Justice*, John Jacobs has captured an important segment of history through and after the Lyndon B. Johnson era. What makes it especially pertinent today is its vivid account of Phillip Burton's role in fixing into law policies that are still central to Democratic politics, as the current controversy over the budget reveals. President Clinton is basing his spending defense on the very ideals that drove the Burton "rage for justice." Propelled first by the Depression and by the LBJ agenda, these concepts needed the fiery determination of a Burton to be fixed as basic party policy: entitlement from government to some measure of care and protection for the very poor, the sick, the aged; and a decent salary level for the working man. Now, as such entitlements are seriously challenged, it is stirring to discover the role this San Francisco Congressman had in framing them into law.

Burton's reach for top House leadership was thwarted in part by his own objectionable personality, uncouth social manners, and excessive drinking; and in part by the ambition of rivals. But he had success. He forced attention to, and remedy for, the



Congressman Phillip Burton.  
Courtesy University of California Press.

miners' devastating "black lung" disease; brought a level of security to farm workers; carried labor's fight for better minimum wage levels, and saved parks across the continent, including the giant redwoods, once he was convinced that parks were not playgrounds for the rich but oases for working people.

There is nothing dull in the telling. Jacobs's prodigious research and countless interviews have yielded vivid insights from Burton's contemporaries. The book brings alive the post-war era in California Democratic politics and the personalities that formed it—Bill Malone, Jess Unruh, Pat Brown, and others. Burton served eight years in the California Legislature and nineteen years in Congress.

The author finds Newt Gingrich most like Burton in a single-minded drive to move an unresponsive Congress: Burton to the left; Gingrich to the right. Gingrich appears more successful, but Jacobs writes, "Burton believed more viscerally in his cause." It is interesting that Jacobs suggests Burton saw Willie Brown, current mayor of San Francisco, as a likely successor in crusading for the poor and the disenfranchised.

But the importance of Jacobs's account is its reach beyond superficials, personalities, and day-to-day events to disclose Burton's strength—keys to political success for anyone. Burton was absolutely trustworthy: he kept his word and his contemporaries knew that. Next, he worked. He didn't rely on staff to inform him of a measure's content or of the ploys unfolding among his peers. He toiled long hours, endlessly, passionately, to know every detail for himself, a doggedness that led to his amazing mastery of the reapportionment process. Also, he did not need praise or acclaim. He did not have to be liked. He had an objective and pursued it unswervingly.

Biographer John Jacobs was for seven years chief political writer for the *San Francisco Examiner* where he worked a total of 15 years, so he knew first-hand much of this history as it was made. But he has reinforced that experience with enormous research, his sources carefully documented. He has created a book more compelling, even for the politically uninitiated, than most novels.

### *Utopia and Dissent: Art, Poetry, and Politics in California.*

By Richard Cándida Smith. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, xxvi, 536 pp., \$35.00 cloth.)

*Reviewed by Richard W. Etulain, professor of history at the University of New Mexico and author of several books on western American history and culture.*

Few students of modern California culture aim at such large, complex goals as Richard Cándida Smith essays in this ambitious study. Above all, he endeavors to provide a close examination of selected aspects of art and poetry in California from the 1940s to the 1980s and to show how countercultural or avant-garde thinkers of these decades tried to reorient public consciousness, from stresses on history, tradition, and order, to emphases on personal experience and subjectivity. "This persistent questioning of the boundaries between reflection and experience," the author asserts, "became the source of power for California's art and poetry movements as private dreams transformed into challenges to structures of public order" (p. xxvi).

To achieve his intricate, exacting goals, Smith focuses on a small group of artists and poets, examining and evaluating their major works and ideas. The first section of the author's three-part study discusses the impact of modernism, especially surrealism, on California art and on poet Kenneth Rexroth's attempt to free himself from coercive historical and personal traditions. Next, Smith examines how the G.I. Bill and the expanding California School of Fine Arts helped to launch a new arts community in the state. Section two centers on matters of gender, through the author's discussions of women artists such as Joan Brown and Jay DeFeo and the familial themes of artist Wallace Berman. The third section, including chapters on the "Politics of Obscenity," pornography, and the impact of the Vietnam War, utilizes the careers of poets Gary Snyder and Robert Duncan to illustrate ideological differences among the avant-garde as they tried to stress the importance of subjective thinking, personal experience, and households in reshaping American thought and society.

Most readers will find this volume a difficult assignment. Although the biographical sections on Joan Brown and Gary Snyder, for example, are easy to follow, the chapters on Rexroth, Berman, and Duncan (particularly) are unusually abstract, even abstruse. Moreover, Smith is sometimes addicted to the new vocabulary of recent cultural critics, sprinkling his pages

with terms like "subversion," "contested notions," "interrogations of the past," "layered cultures," "privileged positions," and "decenterings." Indeed, only the most committed students will wade through the book's dense sections of theoretical and artistic analysis.

Overall, the author faces a problem that has always perplexed intellectual historians: how can one, especially in a close study of ideas (sometimes obscure, "privileged" ideas), demonstrate how those notions shape attitudes, beliefs, and perhaps even policy-making. In the closing section of his long, diligently researched, and closely argued book, Smith opines that "the practice of art became a field that allowed private concerns to enter the realm of public discourse in ways that ultimately altered the terms of political contention" (p. 457). Here, the author achieves more in his examinations of these "private concerns" than in demonstrating how they "ultimately altered" California discourse and policies.

### *John Muir: Apostle of Nature.*

By Thurman Wilkins. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995, xxvii, 302 pp., \$24.95 cloth.)

*Reviewed by Roderick Frazier Nash, professor emeritus of history and environmental studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of Wilderness and the American Mind.*

When it comes to John Muir, who has been the subject of more scholarship than any single person in American environmental history, the appropriate question to bring to any new work is "What does it add?" In the case of Thurman Wilkins's relatively short, undocumented contribution to the Oklahoma Western Biography series, the answer has to be "Not much." Muir's hardscrabble origins in Scotland, his migration to Wisconsin and then California, his efforts on behalf of Yosemite, and his contributions to America's nascent environmental consciousness are so well known as to have acquired near-Biblical familiarity.

Yet Thurman Wilkins, the distinguished cultural historian best known for his study of the painter Thomas Moran, has contributed something of value. His book is very readable—chronological and uncomplicated. Notable for their absence in Wilkins's work are the convoluted psychological digressions common in the longer Muir studies by Michael Cohen, Stephen Fox, Frederick Turner, and others. Wilkins does, however, take the time to analyze Muir's post-Transcendental nature philosophy and to relate it to the ecocentrism of our own time.

A final, personal comment: this is a brief and inevitably redundant work. But when I selected a gift for an elderly friend who wanted to know more about Muir, I chose Wilkins. For non-scholarly purposes, this is the book.



## *Buildings and Builders in Hispanic California, 1769–1850.*

By Mardith K. Schuetz-Miller. (Tucson: Southwestern Mission Research Center; Santa Barbara: A Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, Presidio Research Publication, 1994, xii, 231 pp., \$37.00 paper.)

*Reviewed by the late David Gebhard, professor of history of art and architecture, University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of Luta Maria Riggs, A Woman in Architecture, 1921–1980.*

Since the late nineteenth century the Hispanic mission churches, as well as the presidios and early adobe houses of Alta California, have been a favorite subject of authors. This extensive array of books and the scores of magazine articles had as much to do with the enthusiastic creation of the turn-of-the-century Mission style and the later Spanish Colonial Revival as the historic buildings themselves.

Much of this literature is charming, at times romantic and delightful as literature, but few of these writings contributed much to our understanding of these buildings as artifacts and as architecture. Nor, with a few exceptions, have these publi-

cations revealed very much about the construction of these late eighteenth and early nineteenth century buildings, nor have we been made aware of the individuals who were responsible for their design and construction.

An exception to this dearth of critical studies would be the books and many articles by the architect Rexford Newcomb (*Franciscan Missions Architecture of California* [1916] and *The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California* [1925]). Newcomb was one of the first to actually make measured drawings of the buildings and in a number of instances to suggest what they were like when they were built. Another exception to this lack of factual information on the mission churches and adobes is Elizabeth L. Egenhoff's *Fabrics* (1952), which, through historic illustrations and writings, provides a picture of early adobe construction in Alta California.

Schuetz-Miller's volume is in the same league as Newcomb's and Egenhoff's and, in fact, it constitutes the most definitive volume yet published on the subject of Hispanic building in Alta California. In the first part of her text Schuetz-Miller looks into the highly varied groups of individuals who were involved with the construction of these buildings. She takes us back into Mexico to examine how the Department of San Blas and the Royal Corps of Engineers approached the construction of buildings in remote provinces. She also presents information about architects and guilds and how they practiced in Mexico, and how



Santa Barbara Mission, 1853, watercolor, by James Mason Alden. Photograph by William B. Dewey.  
Courtesy Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library.

buildings manuals were used in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In the second part the author provides a "Biographical Outlines of California Artisans Associated with the Buildings Trades." This section is then followed by the third part of the book where Schuetz-Miller painstakingly discusses the specific building development of each of the presidios and mission churches of Alta California, as well as the artisans involved with their design and construction. Her careful research not only provides a wealth of new information about those who designed and supervised the construction of these buildings, but she also corrects a number of earlier errors, including the dating of many of these buildings and the attribution of individuals who were responsible for their design and construction. Her mode of presentation should be taken as a model of how to discuss buildings and their construction within the broad social, political, and economic context of the time.

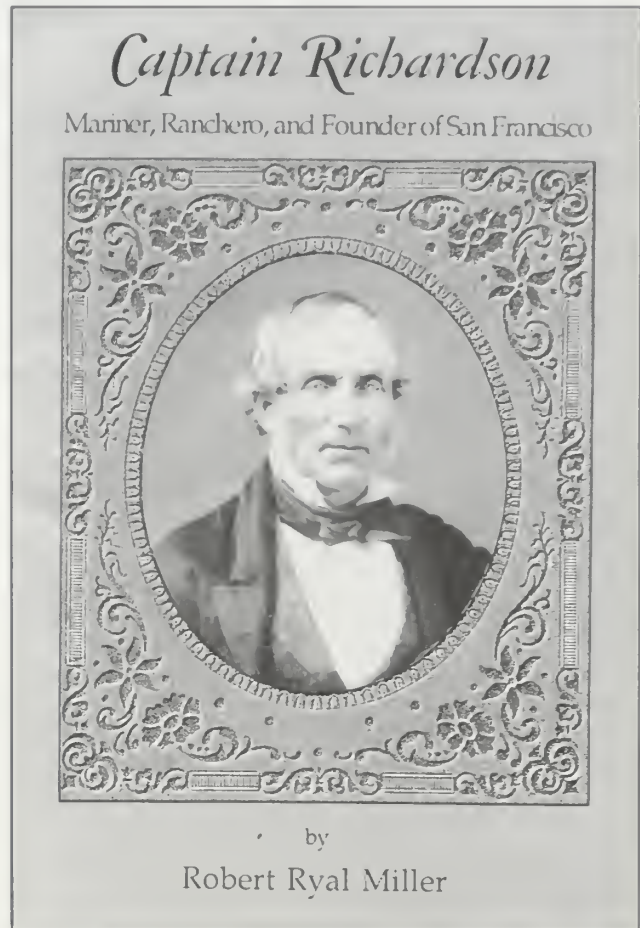
### *Captain Richardson: Mariner, Ranchero, and Founder of San Francisco.*

By Robert Ryal Miller. (Berkeley: La Loma Press, 1995, xii, 228 pp., \$30 cloth.)

*Reviewed by Gary F. Kurutz, Curator of Special Collections, California Room, California State Library.*

Through this biography the history of California from 1822 to 1856 receives superb coverage. Captain William A. Richardson, as told by Professor Robert Ryal Miller, became involved with the leading events and personalities associated with this volatile period. It remains surprising that the life of so interesting a figure as Richardson has not received a full-fledged biography until the publication of this book. He is best known as the founder of the pueblo Yerba Buena (later renamed San Francisco), builder of that town's first house, and for the place-name Richardson Bay near Sausalito. There is, however, as Dr. Miller so ably brings out, much, much more.

An English maritime officer, Captain Richardson jumped ship in San Francisco Bay in 1822 and quickly took advantage of the opportunities afforded him in this pastoral country. Like many newcomers, Richardson married into an influential Californio family (marrying María Antonia Martínez), adopted the Roman Catholic faith, and became a citizen of Mexico. During the next thirty-four years, the Englishman racked up a number of impressive accomplishments. He first made his way by using his maritime skills, charting the waters of San Francisco [Bay], transporting supplies to the missions, and sailing ships to Alaska and Peru. For a short period, he moved his family to Mission San Gabriel and became involved in coastal shipping for the mission. The Richardsons returned to northern California and received grants of land for Rancho Sausalito (Marin County) and Rancho Albion (Mendocino County). As maritime activity in Alta California slowly grew, he took on such responsibilities



Captain William A. Richardson, ca. 1854, daguerreotype.  
Courtesy California State Library.

as serving as the harbormaster and captain of the port of San Francisco and piloting ships entering San Francisco Bay. From his strategic properties around San Francisco Bay, the ranchero sold much needed supplies to visiting ships. When war broke out between Mexico and the United States, Richardson switched loyalties and piloted Commodore Robert F. Stockton's flagship *Congress*. Following the discovery of gold in 1848, the mariner ferried hundreds of Argonauts to Stockton and Sacramento. Despite these adventures, Richardson's life in his final years became one of economic struggle and reflected the difficulties of pre-Gold Rush settlers in holding onto their land grants.

While these individual accomplishments remain noteworthy, the picture created of pre-statehood California makes this biography doubly interesting. Dr. Miller skillfully documents the col-



orful social life of the rancho, the turmoil and confusion of Mexican California politics, the history of land grants, and the influential role of foreign visitors and settlers. It seemed that every major visitor to California encountered the English transplant. Miller's narrative becomes a Who's Who of distinguished visitors and a reading bibliography of early California travel literature. Frederick W. Beechey, Edward Belcher, La Pérouse, Auguste Bernard Duhaut-Cilly, Eugene Duflot de Mofras, Abel A. Du Petit-Thouars, Otto von Kotzebue, Charles Wilkes, and Richard Henry Dana numbered among those who enjoyed the hospitality of Richardson and his family. As well, Richardson interacted with a galaxy of early American pioneers.

Robert Ryal Miller is suitably qualified to explore the life and times of this key player in transitional California. He has written ten books on the Spanish contribution to the Western Hemisphere, the war with Mexico, and California before the Gold Rush. In investigating this pioneer, Dr. Miller dug out much primary material from the vast resources of the Bancroft Library, scoured county archives for land records, and turned up such gems as the recollections of daughter Mariana Richardson de Torres in the John Bidwell Collection of the California State Library. Appendices concerning Richardson's land grants add important source material. Handsomely designed and cogently written, Dr. Miller's book must be applauded for making a major contribution to our understanding of Mexican California and adding to the shelves of Californiana a long overdue biography. This volume certainly ranks in importance with Andrew Rolle's biography of William Heath Davis or Susanna Bryant Dakin's studies of Hugo Reid and William E. P. Hartnell. This first-rate life of the founder of the town that became San Francisco, however, deserves wider distribution than three hundred copies.

## *Captain Juan Bautista de Anza: Correspondence on Various Subjects, 1775: Archivo General de la Nación, Provincias Internas 237, Section 3. Antepasados VIII.*

Transcribed, Translated, and Indexed (With Commentary Notes) by Donald T. Garate. (San Diego: Los Californianos, 1995, vii, 328 pp., \$27.50 paper.)

*Reviewed by W. Michael Mathes, Orden Mexicana del Aguila Azteca; professor of history, emeritus, University of San Francisco, and author of books and articles in English and Spanish on the early history of the Californias.*

Although the pioneering work on the explorations of Juan Bautista de Anza in Alta California was published by Herbert E. Bolton in five volumes sixty years ago, in the intervening decades new and important documentation on these expeditions has come to light. Similarly, reconsideration of lesser documents, known but dismissed by early-twentieth-century historians of the Californias who concentrated on principal diaries and jour-

nals, has resulted in some substantive revisions and extensive detailing of the historical narrative. This volume falls within the latter category, for its contents were known to Bolton and his students but considered of little importance.

In his extensive and excellent research on the origins and family of Juan Bautista de Anza, Donald Garate of the National Park Service has selected for translation and publication 61 documents from the Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico, relative to formation of the 1775 Anza expedition to Alta California for settlement of San Francisco. Covering the period from January 2 to October 7, 1775, 49 of these are correspondence between Viceroy Antonio María Bucareli y Ursúa and Anza, two letters each of José Joaquín Moraga, Fray Francisco Tomás Hermenegildo Garcés, Juan Felipe Belderrain, and one each of Juan Masón, José Joaquín de Islas, and Ignacio Miguel de Urrea. Three additional documents comprise an invoice for provisions, a report on the expedition, and a muster of recruits and their families assigned to reinforce the presidio of San Carlos de Monterey. All of the documents originated as Anza marched from Mexico City to his presidial command at Tubac in modern Arizona, and some are drafts and rough copies.

A foreword explains the editor's methodology for translation, and the body of the text comprises a chronologically ordered paleographic transcription with a well-prepared English translation of each document from expediente three of Provincias Internas, Tomo 237. The printed documents are followed, unfortunately not preceded, by Commentary Notes, a useful synthesis of the text into historical narrative in spite of the incorrect ordination of Bucareli as a "priest." Demonstration of differences between the Anza texts and those of Fray Pedro Font published by Bolton, and extensive information on the members of the expedition and their families is also provided. A glossary of persons gives rather vague data relative to a few of those named in the documents, and that of places, more useful had it been a map. The glossary reduces Loreto, seat of government of both Californias in 1775, to a "presidio and town in Baja California" and San Blas, a naval department and principal port on the Pacific coast of New Spain at the time, to a "town and shipping center on the west coast of Mexico below Baja California," while Santa Cruz de Querétaro is identified as the college of all Franciscans (Serra would object to this) serving in northern New Spain. A costly and unnecessary appendix of rather fuzzy facsimiles of the documents occupies pages 197-323, but is followed by a useful analytical index to the typeset text.

As in most works with extensive Spanish text printed in the U.S., some accents are absent, but the transcriptions and translations are clearly printed. Criticisms are primarily of format and do not clearly detract from the importance of the publication of documentary works such as this. This is a valuable contribution to the history of Spanish Alta California, and hopefully will be followed by further discoveries and published documentation relative to Anza and his times.

## *A Centennial History of The Tidings.*

By Msgr. Francis J. Weber. (Mission Hills, Calif.: Saint Francis Historical Society, 1995.)

## *A Bibliographical Gathering: The Writings of Msgr. Francis J. Weber (1953–1995).*

(Mission Hills, Calif.: Saint Francis Historical Society, 1995, 270 pp.)

Reviewed by Francis Guest.

Preceded by the demise of previous journals, the *Catholic Tidings* was launched, in 1895, by Patrick W. Croake. Bishop Francis Mora, ever interested in Catholic journalism, offered enthusiastic support but no financial help. With the retirement of Bishop Mora to Barcelona in 1896, Bishop George T. Montgomery did everything in his power to assist the editor, but still withheld financial aid.

In those days the American Protective Association was foremost among the most powerful enemies of the Catholic Church. Because of its influence, the word Catholic was dropped from the newspaper's title on April 17, 1897, and it became known simply as *The Tidings*. The new editor, from 1899 to 1904, was John J. Bodkin.

After seven successful years, Bishop Thomas J. Conaty purchased the official Catholic newspaper for the diocese of Monterey-Los Angeles, but it was not until August 3, 1906, that the paper was identified as the "official organ of the diocese." An editorial in the *Boston Republic* noted that, under the prelate's direction, *The Tidings* assumed "authority of tone, a sane and poised point of view and literary fineness."

During the first decade of its existence as a Catholic paper, the interest of Bishop Conaty became paramount. He often visited the office of *The Tidings*, dropping in almost daily, although he always encouraged the editors to speak for themselves and for the paper. A further characteristic of this period was its persistent concern regarding Indian schools and reservations.

Right Reverend John J. Cantwell, who served as archbishop from 1917 to 1947, took no personal interest in directing the newspaper's affairs. The newspaper immersed itself in a host of contemporary issues such as women suffrage, immigration, morality of strikes, child labor, and federal control of education.

Priests who conducted the affairs of *The Tidings* invariably held degrees in theology from the Catholic University of America. The following were outstanding in their service: Fr. John Dunne, Fr. Thomas McCarthy, Msgr. William North, Msgr. Patrick Roche, and a distinguished Catholic layman, Alphonse Antczak.

The views of Archbishop J. Francis A. McIntyre were entirely different from those of Archbishop Cantwell. He envisioned the diocesan newspaper as "the mouthpiece of the Church" for the area it served. "It gives the opinions of the best minds on current developments in the world and its governments . . . All of this and more may be said of your *Tidings*."

*The Tidings* is the longest continuously published newspaper on the west coast of America. It has won twenty-seven national

and numerous regional awards, which is more than any other Catholic newspaper on the continent can claim.

*A Bibliographical Gathering* is an important book—a 270-page bibliography of Francis J. Weber's own works. But it is more than that. It is a volume in which the author, distinguishing carefully between a list of books and a producer, comments on some of the various works, explaining their nature and purpose.

Part One deals with the California missions, with Junípero Serra, with biographies of earlier prelates in the history of the Catholic Church in California, and with Calendars of documents for the episcopacies of Right Reverend James Conaty, Right Reverend George T. Montgomery, Most Reverend John Joseph Cantwell, and Most Reverend J. Francis A. McIntyre. Part Two is concerned with miniature books.

Part Three tells of the 150 book reviews the author produced and of all the various newsletters for friends of the Archival Center. Part Four lists all of the various articles the author produced, 316 of them. Part Five mentions, in particular, all the articles written for *The Tidings* from 1969 to 1995. In addition, Weber includes articles he composed for other publications, such as the *Byzantine Catholic World*, the *Catholic Voice*, and the *Hawaii Catholic*.

A brief listing of some of the more memorable topics on which the author chose to write will provide a suitable reflection of his interests. For example, he wrote about the historical sketch of *The Roman Missal* written in 1822 by Bishop John England, about societies formed in the United States to foster the recording of ecclesiastical history, about the enumeration of sources for Catholic history in California, about California's Catholic heritage, about the role Serra played for American independence, about John J. Cantwell's appointment to the Bishopric of Monterey-Los Angeles, about the historical archives of the Catholic University of America, about Catholicity in California, about the ecclesiastical discipline for selecting bishops throughout American Catholic history, about how to organize, manage, and utilize a support group, about John Tracy Ellis, historian of American Catholicism, and the like.

In addition to all these books and articles, the author has taken advantage of some hundreds of opportunities, at myriads of organizations, societies, and clubs, to speak. He includes a limited number of titles of talks for the advantage of interested readers.

I think we may conclude with a quotation: "I can honestly say that the only purpose of this compilation is that of providing an accessible guide to forty years of mostly historical writings."

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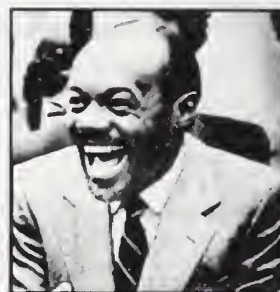
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# Street, "Origins of Farm Labor Importation in California," pp. 306-321.

1. Franklin Carter, ed. and trans., "[August B.] Duhaut-Cilly's Account of California in the Years 1827-28," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 8 (Winter 1929): 329.
2. See for example Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1982); Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field* (New York: Little and Brown, 1939); Stuart Jamieson, *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture* (U.S. Department of Labor Bulletin No. 836, Washington, D.C., 1945); Varden Fuller, "The Supply of Agricultural Labor as a Factor in the Evolution of Farm Organization in California" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1939).
3. For details of the journey see Donald Eugene Smith and Frederick J. Teggart, eds., *Diary of Gaspar de Portolá During the California Expedition of 1769-1770* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938), 1: 21-89.
4. The exact number of Baja field hands who came north in 1769 is debatable. The best source, Father Juan Crespi's diary in Herbert E. Bolton, trans. and ed., *Francisco Palóu's Historical Memoirs of New California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1923), 2: 40-104, calculates that 26 of the original 86 Baja Indians survived. Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco: The History Co., 1886), 1:132-41, 165-68, also cites these numbers. Don DeNevi and Noel F. Moholy, *Junipero Serra* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), 99-105, claim that 27 of the Baja Indians survived, and that 93 started north, (13 of 51 Loreto Indians surviving), but cite no sources. Various other accounts state that a total of 91 field hands left from Baja, and that 49 departed on the Loreto expedition.
5. For Jose de Galvez, see Luis Navarro Garcia, *Jose de Galvez y la Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1964), 135, 154-57; and Herbert I. Priestley, *Jose de Galvez, Visitor General of New Spain, 1765-1771* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1916), 279. For Serra, see Francisco Palou, *Life of Junipero Serra* (Washington,

D.C.: The Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955), trans. Maynard J. Geiger.

6. The classic interpretation of the Spanish mission system is still Herbert E. Bolton, "The Mission as a Frontier Institution in the Spanish American Colonies," *American Historical Review* 23 (October 1917): 42-61. A modern update is John Francis Bannon, *The Spanish Borderlands Frontier, 1513-1821* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970), 49-54. The best recent effort is Harry W. Crosby's magisterial *Antigua California: Mission and Colony on the Peninsular Frontier, 1677-1768* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), esp. 390-93.
7. J. C. H. Aveling, *The Jesuits* (New York: Syein and Day, 1981); Herbert E. Bolton, *Rim of Christendom: A Biography of Ensebio Francisco Kino, Pacific Coast Pioneer* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1936).
8. Quote from Bishop Juan de Zumarraga to nephew, Aug. 23, 1539, in Agapito Rey, "Missionary Aspects of the Founding of New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review* 23 (January 1948): 23. For the reciprocal relationship between mission building, agriculture, conversion of Indians, and farm labor, see Robert Archibald, *The Economic Aspects of the California Missions* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1978), 142; Eugene David Burnett, "The Role of Agriculture in the Upper California Mission System as Illustrated at Mission San Diego, 1769-1784" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Louis University, 1958), 21, 25; Lionel Ridout, "Fernán Francisco de Lasuén and the Economic Development of the California Missions" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1940), 16-23.
9. Clarence H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 158-60; and Peter M. Dunne, *Black Robes in Lower California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), 392, 436-37.
10. Bolton, trans. and ed., *Palou's Memoirs* 1: 284, and Herbert I. Priestley, trans. and ed., *Pedro Fages: Historical, Political, and Natural Description of California, 1775* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1931), 19, discuss

the labor practices used in establishing missions.

11. Quote from Miguel Venegas, "Empresas Apostolicas de los Misiones de la Compania de Jesus de la Provincia de Nueva Espana Obras en la Conquista de Californias ... por el Padre Miguel Venegas de la Misma Compania de Jesus," Sabado, 7 de Noviembre de 1739, incomplete copy, Huntington Library, [hereinafter cited as HL], and complete copy in Herbert Bolton Collection, Bancroft Library, [hereinafter cited as HBC, BL] 519, also 516, 523. The best scholarly account of the Cochimies is Sigismundo Taraval, *The Indian Uprising in Lower California, 1734-1737* (Los Angeles: The Quivira Society, 1931), trans. by Marguerite Eyre Wilbur, 38. See also Anonymous [probably written by a Dominican missionary of the post-Jesuit period], "Descripción breve de la California, su situación, extension, costas, etc. [sic] con otras noticias que pueden conducir para el conocimiento de ellas," *Archivo General de Indias*, [transcripts] Bancroft Library [hereinafter cited as AGI, BL].
12. Sam Kushner interview, August 7, 1973, Arvin, California. Kushner was a reporter for *People's World*, the U.S. Communist Party newspaper, and covered farm labor extensively during the 1960s and 1970s. Kushner sees the importation of Baja field hands as "the beginning of a long history of labor manipulation and siphoning off of an inexhaustible source of farm labor south of the border." In *The Long Road To Delano* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 5, Kushner views the mission farmworkers as the beginning of a story of "oppression and near slavery" extending into the twentieth century.
13. Galvez to Serra, La Paz, Nov. 23, 1768. Documentos Relativos a las Misiones de Californias, Lancaster-Jones Papers, Archivo del Museo Nacional de Mexico 1:200-203 [hereinafter cited as DRMCJLP AMN]. Galvez to Serra, Real de Santa Ana, July 22, 1768. Ibid. 1:163-64. Galvez to Lasuén, La Paz, Nov. 23, 1768. Galvez to Serra, Real de Santa Ana, Oct. 10, 1768. Galvez to Lasuén, Cape San Lucas, Feb. 20, 1769. Palou to Juan Andres Loreto, Nov. 24, 1769 [describing the syphilis



- infection at Todos Santos Mission] Santa Barbara Mission Archives, California [hereinafter cited as SBMA]; Bolton ed., *Palou's Memoirs* 1: 38-41, 85-86, 119.
14. Homer Aschmann, *The Central Desert of Baja California: Demography and Ecology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 145, 148, 187, 251, gives figures on population decline. Palou to Rafael Verger, Mission San Francisco Javier, June 13, 1772, Colección de Documentos para la Historia de Mexico, First Series 3, Archivo General y Público de la Nación, [hereinafter cited as CDHM, AGN] expresses fear that the Indians would die out. See also Informe General, Correspondencia de los Virreyas, First Series 172, No. 699, Paragraph 14, Archivo General y Público de la Nación, [hereinafter cited as CV, AGN] for an overview of diseases among Baja field hands. José de Gálvez to Council of the Indies, Madrid, Dec. 18, 1773, Archivo General de Indias, Guadalajara, 418, [hereinafter cited as AGI] reports on the failure of plans to reduce Baja Indians to organized town dwellers.
15. My estimate that there were 27 or 28 Baja field hands in Alta California in 1770 is based on figures in Bolton, ed., *Palou's Memoirs*, passim; Bancroft, *History of California*, 1: 165, 167-68, 175-77; and Charles E. Chapman, *A History of California: The Spanish Period* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), 222-23. The accounting is as follows: 26 (or 27-28) survivors from the original 86 sent forth in the two overland expeditions from Baja California in 1769, minus one killed in an August 15 Indian attack on mission San Diego, 6 who died of sickness that winter, 2 who went south with Rivera's resupply expedition to Mexico on Feb. 11, 1770, and 10 dropped off by the ship *San Antonio* on March 19, plus one deserter recovered by Portolá in April while crossing the Santa Lucia Mountains while headed for Carmel, giving a total of 27 or 28 field hands. However, Bancroft's account can be interpreted as indicating that the 10 field hands referred to were those left behind when the second Monterey expedition departed on April 17. This would lower the total Baja farmworker force to 17 or 18. Another accounting discrepancy may be caused by the presence of three Baja Indian "boy servants," one of whom was killed in the Aug. 15 attack, and who seem to have been included in some lists of field hands but not others.
16. One magnificent book, William Goetzmann's, *Exploration and Empire: The Explorer and the Scientist in the Winning of the American West* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), illustrates the point by saying nothing about Baja field hands, mission farmworkers, or any of the laborers, muleteers, and roustabouts participating in the various Spanish, French, and American expeditions and colonization efforts. An exception is Harlan Hague, "Guides for the Pathfinders: The Indian Contribution to the Exploration of the American West," *Pacific Historian* 26 (Fall 1982): 54-55, 58, 62-63. For Baja field hands doubling as trail blazers on Gaspar Portolá's expedition to San Francisco Bay, see Peter Browning, ed., *The Discovery of San Francisco Bay: The Portolá Expedition of 1769-1770; The Diary of Miguel Costansó* (Lafayette, CA.: Heyday Books, 1992), xxi-xxxi, 191.
17. For early planting and descriptions of starvation see Antonine Tibesar, ed., *Writings of Junipero Serra* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955), 1: 227, 297, 367; 3: 145; and Herbert E. Bolton, ed., *Font's Complete Diary: A Chronicle of the Founding of San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1931), 177-78, 301-303. For irrigation as early as 1773, see F. E. Green, "The San Diego Old Mission Dam and Irrigation System," (typewritten, 1934), 16, SBMA; Lasuén, Informe de la Misión de San Diego, Dec. 31, 1779, original in AGN, copy in SBMA; and Herbert E. Bolton, ed., *Anza's California Expeditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1930), 4: 303. Father Rafael Verger, head of the College of San Fernando in Mexico City, complained in a letter to Viceroy Antonio María Bucareli y Ursúa, Dec. 25, 1772, that "What is lacking is hands to cultivate and work the fields because the soldiers do not want to help in any way in this task," AGI, Chapman Document No. 1939, HL.
18. Gov. Pedro Fages to the Viceroy, Monterey, June 26, 1772, AGN, *Californias*, 66; and Informe del estado las misiones de Monterey, Father Francisco Pangua, Mexico, Dec. 9, 1776, AGN, *Californias*, 72, transcript in SBMA. See also Augusta Fink, *Monterey County* (Fresno, 1978), 45, and Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Diego Mission* (San Francisco: The James H. Barry Co., 1920), 103.
19. Quote from Tibesar, ed., *Writings of Serra*, 2: 141; 3: 299. See also "Anza's Return Diary," in Bolton, ed., *Anza's California Expeditions*, 2: 110, 224; Rafael Verger to Bucareli, Dec. 25, 1772, AGI, Chapman Doc. No. 1939, and Bucareli to Julián de Arriaga, May 27, 1774, *Ibid.*, Chapman Document No. 2625, both in HL. The food crisis is described in Serra to Father Francisco Palou, Monterey, August 18, 1772, in Maynard Geiger, ed., *Palou's Life of Junipero Serra* (Washington, DC: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1960), 124-26.
20. Representación of Serra to Bucareli, Mexico, March 9, 1773, copy in SBMA unfolds the original petition. Serra's Representación of March 13, 1773, contains a request for peons, farm families, and artisans, as well as notes thirty-two points covering every phase of mission activity.
21. Quote from Serra to Bucareli, May 21, 1773, SBMA. This letter goes on to describe labor shortages and other problems at length, as does Palou to Bucareli, Report on the State of the Missions, San Carlos, December 10, 1773, in Bolton, ed., *Palou's Memoirs*, III: 213-38.
22. Bolton, ed., *Palou's Memoirs*, I: 298-303, reports Lasuén's expedition took along only six families of Baja field hands. However, Palou to Serra, Mission San Carlos de Monterey, November 26, 1773, DRMCLJP, 2: 78-86, AMN, reports 10 Cochimi families and 12 Cochimi boys traveled north. See also Richard Pourade, *The Call to California* (San Diego: Union-Tribune Publishing Co., 1968).
23. For various aspects of the program to import Baja field hands see Decision of His Excellency and the Royal Council, Mexico, May 6, 1773, in Bolton, ed., *Palou's Memoirs*, III: 37-55; Regulations for the Peninsula of California and the Establishments of Monterey, Juan José de Echeveste, Mexico, May 24, 1773, *ibid.*, 57-77; Opinion of the Fiscal, Mexico, June 14, 1773, *ibid.*, 78-89; Bucareli to Del Campo Viergol, Mexico, August 4, 1773, in Bucareli, 113, AGN; Serra to Viceroy Bucareli, Monterey, February 5, 1775, Provincias Internas, 166, *ibid.*; and Serra to Bucareli, March 13, 1773, "Report on the general condition and needs of the missions of Upper California," in Tibesar, ed., *Writings of Serra* 1, 295-327. My tally of farm laborers in the July-August-September expedition to San Diego and San Gabriel is from Palou to Serra, Mission San Carlos de Monterey, November 26, 1773, DRMCLJP, 2: 78-86, AMN.
24. Bancroft, *History of California*, 1: 221, states Tarabal deserted with his parents in August, not with a Cochimi boy in October, but cites no evidence. Chapman, *A History of California*, 298-99, states Tarabal escaped with his wife and brother, but also fails to cite a source. Hildgarde Hawthorne, *California Missions: Their Romance and Beauty* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1942), 66, asserts that Tarabal fled with two other natives, and gives no further details. Biographical information on Tarabal is from Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Gabriel Mission and the Beginnings of Los Angeles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1927), 17-19, 24. Information on landmarks is from Mildred Hoover, Hero Rensch, and Ethel Rensch, *Historic Spots in California* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, rev. ed., 1966), 107. For the journey west, see Bolton, ed. and trans., *Anza's California Expeditions* (Berkeley, 1930), esp. 5: 117, Anza to Viceroy, Santa Olaya [on the Colorado River], Feb. 28, 1774; and Engelhardt, *Missions and Missionaries of California* (San Francisco: James H. Barry Co., 1912), 2: 135-36.
25. Finbar Kenneally, ed. and trans., *Writings of Fermín Francisco de Lasuén* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1965), 1: 49-50; Harlan Hague, *The Road to California: The Search for A Southern Overland Route, 1540-1848* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1978), 58-67; and Richard Pourade, *Anza Conquers the Desert* (San Diego: Union-Tribune Publishing Co., 1971).
26. Raymond F. Wood, "Francisco Garcés, Explorer of Southern California," *Southern California Quarterly*, 51 (September 1969): 189, 193-97. See also F. F. Latta, "Indian Buckaroos," Ms., 2, in F. F. Latta Collection, Sky Farming, HL.
27. Engelhardt, *Missions and Missionaries*, 2: 136, 192-93, 195, 199; John Galvin, ed. and trans., *A Record of Travels in Arizona and California, 1775-1776: Father Francisco Garcés* (San Francisco: John Howell Books, 1965), vi, (Dec. 5, 1775) 15; (Dec. 18) 21; (Dec. 19) 22; (Feb. 29, 1776) 29; (Feb. 29) 34; (March 4) 35; (March 17) 37; (April 13) 44; (April 26) 45; (April 27) 47; (April 30) 47; (May 3) 50; (May 6) 55; (May 7) 56; (May 30) 60; (July 25) 81.
28. Elliot Coues, ed. and trans., *On the Trail of a Spanish Pioneer: The Diary and Itinerary of Francisco Garcés on His Travels through Sonora, Arizona, and California, 1775-1776* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1900), entry for May 7, 1776; Bolton, ed. and trans., *Font's Complete Diary*, 84; Chapman, *A History of the Spanish Period*, 316, 340-41.

30. Ynez Viole O'Neill, "Father Serra Plans the Founding of Mission San Juan Capistrano," *California Historical Quarterly* 36 (Spring 1977): 47, translates a list of supplies which includes Baja field hands "who came up of their own free will . . . assigned to this mission for its inception and for its agriculture."
31. The document establishing Mission San Juan Capistrano as the birthplace of winemaking in California is Father Pedro Pablo de Mugartegui to [Sindico of the College of San Fernando], March 15, 1779, DRMC LJP, 2. ANM, copy also in SBMA. Serra to Lasuen, Dec. 8, 1781, Mission San Carlos, suggests that vines were also planted at San Diego in 1779. For plantings in 1781, see Lasuen, Informe de la Mision de San Diego, Dec. 31, 1781, original in AGN, copy in SBMA. The implication that these plantings were done by six neophyte Indian field hands is in Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Juan Capistrano* (Los Angeles: The Standard Printing Co., 1922), 19.
32. For the status of winemaking on five of the southern missions, see Lasuen, Biennial Reports, 1797, 1798, Feb. 20, 1799, San Carlos, SBMA. For the northern missions see Biennial Reports, 1809, 1810, Father Esteban Tapis, San Luis Rey, May 25, 1811, *ibid.* For the ban on liquor see Repuesta (reply) to article 18, Interrogatorio (questionnaire) of 1812 (1814) to Mission San Jose by Fray Durán, November 1, 1814, translated from the original by Francis Florence McCarthy, *ibid.* The most succinct discussion of when and where Indians and padres harvested and produced the first California vintage is Roy Brady, "The Swallow that Came from Capistrano: How the vine really got to California and who really made the state's first wine," *New West* 3 (September 24, 1979): 55-60. See also Edith Webb, "Agriculture in the Days of the Early California Padres," *The Americas* 4 (January 1948): 330-35.
33. For the problems of overland transportation and the need for a route across the Sonoran Desert, see Miguel Costansó, Report to the Viceroy, Sept. 5, 1772, in Bolton, ed. and trans., *Anza's California Expeditions*, 5: 8-11.
34. For the founding of these outposts see Richard Yates, "Locating the Colorado River mission San Pedro y San Pablo de Bicuñer," *Journal of Arizona History* 13 (Summer 1972): 123-30. For the Yuma massacre see Kieran McCarthy, ed. and trans., "The Colorado Massacre of 1781: Maria Montiel's Report," *Journal of Arizona History* 16 (Autumn 1975): 221-25.
35. Considered the standard account of the beginning of farm labor importation programs, Otev Scruggs, "The First Farm Labor Program, 1917-1921," *Arizona and the West* 2 (Winter 1960): 320-23, establishes the World War I era as the beginning of government-sponsored *bracero* programs but does not consider the arrangement under which Baja field hands came north.
36. Some writers have suggested that labor importation first began on an organized basis with the recruitment programs of the sugar beet companies around the turn of the century. See for example Theresa Wolfson, "People Who Go to the Beets," *The American Child* 1 (Nov. 1919): 220.

# Beesley, "The Beginnings of Conservation," pp. 322-337.

1. The time from 1827 to 1900 spans the period from the first recorded crossing of the Sierra by Jedediah S. Smith to the development and implementation of the policy concerning the newly designated "Forest Reserves" developed by the Forestry Commission of the National Academy of Sciences under President Grover Cleveland. It is on this period that this article focuses. Tom Knudson's series, "Majesty and Tragedy: The Sierra In Peril," can be found in the Sacramento *Bee* June 9-13, 1991. In response to Knudson's articles, the state of California Resources Agency held a "Sierra Summit" conference in November 1991. For a summary of its recommendations, see Sierra Summit Steering Committee, *The Sierra Nevada: Report of the Sierra Summit Steering Committee* (Sacramento: The Resources Agency of California, July 1992). Some environmentalists, unsatisfied with the recommendations of this group, held a conference entitled "Sierra Now" during August 1992. For a summary of this conference see *Sierra Now: Conference Summary* (Malibu, CA: Environment Now, 1993). Troubled by both the recommendations of the Sierra Summit and Sierra Now, a group of resource-users and local government representatives sponsored another conference on the Sierra in June 1993. This conference was called "The Sierra Economy: Sustainable Development in Harmony With Nature." As of the time of the writing of this article, June 1995, no published report from this group had been produced. For newspaper accounts of "The Sierra Economy" conference see the Sacramento *Bee*, June 17-18, 1993, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 17, 1993. In 1994-95, the Sacramento, California, public television station, KVIE, produced a documentary video entitled "Sierra in Peril," which was based in part on Knudson's Sacramento *Bee* series.
2. The displacement of Sierran Indians, which followed emigration to California and the Gold Rush, profoundly altered land-use patterns, reduced wildlife, altered drainage systems, and changed vegetation distribution and variety in the Sierra Nevada. This article does not intend to focus on a comparison of native uses of the Sierra and the usage that followed immigration by non-Indian sources. For discussion of California Indians and their cultures, see Robert F. Heizer, ed., *California*, vol. 8, *Handbook of North American Indians*, William C. Sturtevant, general ed. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1978); and Robert F. Heizer and Albert B. Elsasser, *The Natural World of the California Indians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980). See also Thomas C. Blackburn and Kat Anderson, editors and compilers, *Before the Wilderness: Environmental Management by Native Californians* (Menlo Park, CA: Ballena Press, 1993).
3. For a discussion of the meaning of the two terms, see Michael P. Cohen, *The Pathless Way: John Muir and American Wilderness* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 294-97.
4. For examples, see Thomas R. Dunlap, *Saving America's Wildlife: Ecology and the Ameri-*
5. *can Model 1850-1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 3-6; Stephen Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1981), 104-10; Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement 1890-1913* with a new preface (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 1-7; Herve Huth, *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957); Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience*, 2nd ed., rev. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977, 1987), xix-xx, 1-9; Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969, 1990), xi-xvi, 1-5; Douglas H. Strong, *Dreamers and Defenders: American Conservationists* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 1-7.
6. According to Cohen, *Pathless Way*, 294-97; Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy*, 109-10, and Strong, *Dreamers and Defenders*, 1-110, easterners such as George Perkins Marsh, Charles S. Sargent, J. Horace McFarland, C. Hart Merriam, Robert U. Johnson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Gifford Pinchot were major influences in developing the ideas of conservation and preservation. Both Cohen and Fox stress the role of Muir as an effective popularizer of the idea.
7. George R. Brooks, ed., *The Southwest Expedition of Jedediah S. Smith: His Personal Account of the Journey to California, 1826-1827* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977, 1989), 167-72; Zenas Leonard, *The Adventures of a Mountain Man: The Narrative of Zenas Leonard*, ed. by Milo Quaife (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1934, 1978), 125-39, 197, 201-202.
8. George R. Stewart, *The California Trail* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962, 1971), 7-295.
9. J. S. Holliday, *The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), 25-44.
10. Francis Farquhar, *History of the Sierra Nevada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965).
11. See, for example, Lary M. Dilsaver and William C. Tweed, *Challenge of the Big Trees: A Resource History of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks* (Three Rivers, CA: Sequoia Natural History Association, 1990); Alfred Runte, *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990); Douglas H. Strong, *Tahoe: An Environmental History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).
12. Yerna R. Johnston, *Sierra Nevada* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 1970), 1-7; Tim Palmer, *The Sierra Nevada: A Mountain Journey* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1988), ix-xi.
13. Brooks, ed., *The Southwest Expedition of Jedediah S. Smith*, 167-72; Leonard, *The Adventures of a Mountain Man*, 120-39.
14. John C. Fremont, *Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1842 and to Oregon and North California in 1843-1844* (Washington: Gales and Seaton Printers reprinted by University Microfilm Inc., 1966); Charles Preuss, *Exploring With Fremont*, ed. by F. G. and F. K. Guddie (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 1-ans-



- ford W. Hastings, *The Emigrant's Guide to Oregon and California* (New York: Da Capo Press, reprinted in 1969 from the 1845 edition); Ray Allen Billington and Martin Ridge, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier*, 5th ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), 491-512.
14. Herbert Eaton, *The Overland Trail to California in 1852* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 265-71; Farquhar, *History of the Sierra Nevada*, 41-51; David R. Lewis, "Argonauts on the Overland Trail," in James Rawls, ed., *New Directions in California History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 101-15; Stewart, *The California Trail*, 7-105, 142-318. For a simple and moving account left by one of the Donner group, see Patrick Breen, *Diary of Patrick Breen, One of the Donner Party*, ed. by Frederick J. Teggart (Berkeley: Publications of the Academy of Pacific Coast History, 1, no. 6, July 1910), 5-15. For the most current account of the Donner Party incident see Joseph A. King, *Winter of Entrapment: A New Look at the Donner Party*, revised edition (Lafayette, CA: K and K Publications, 1992, 1994).
15. Franklin Langworthy, *Scenery of the Plains, Mountains and Mines*, ed. by Paul C. Phelps from the 1855 edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932), 139; David M. Potter, ed., *Trail to California: The Overland Journal of Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), 200-204.
16. H.S. Anable, "Journals, 1852," Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CF 137, 86-92; Nicholas Carriger, "Journal of an Orrigon Trip, and Overland Journey to California, 1846," Bancroft Library, CF 111, Sept. 19-26, 1846; Alonzo Delano, *Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings* (Auburn and Buffalo: Miller, Orton and Mulligan, 1854), 201-39; George and John T. Gridley, "Letters to Elisha Gridley," Bancroft Library, 82/62 C, Aug. 4, 1850; Sarah E. Royce, "Reminiscences," Bancroft Library, 72/53 C; William Kelly, *A Stroll Through the Diggings of California* (Oakland: Biobooks, 1950, first printed in London in 1852), 55.
17. For a detailed series of maps, photographs, and commentary on the mountain crossing routes, see Charles K. Graydon, *Trail of the First Wagons Over the Sierra Nevada* (St. Louis: The Patrice Press, 1986), 19-78.
18. Lewis, "Argonauts on the Oregon Trail," 101-15. Lewis notes that the largest category of comments recorded in the accounts he sampled were of the practical sort.
19. Dr. John H. Wayman is quoted in Eaton, *The Overland Trail to California in 1852*, 297.
20. See David Cosad, "Diary, March 13, 1849-Feb. 20, 1850," California Historical Society Library, Ms. 453, July 19-23, 1849; and the account of Charles Schneider, quoted in Eaton, *The Overland Trail to California*, 272-73. In the account of Wakeman and Bryarly, Potter, ed., *Trail to California*, 199-202, can be found references to the beauty of the scenery that would "put at defiance the artist's pencil" and the beauty of Donner Lake, mixed in with fear of crossing and the horror of cannibalism.
21. The periods that have most significantly affected the Sierra include the time under consideration here (1848-1900), and the time following World War II, which has seen similar massive effects on the range. The latter period may well have the most significant effect, because technology has made it possible for human activities to continue year-round, rather than being limited by weather cycles.
22. Holliday, *The World Rushed In*, 25-44.
23. Rodman W. Paul, *California Gold: The Beginning of Mining in the Far West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1947), 20-35.
24. *Ibid.*, 50-66, 124-70, 284-333.
25. Ralph Mann, *After the Gold Rush: Society in Grass Valley and Nevada City, California, 1849-1870* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), 1-33; see also Joseph H. Jackson, *Anybody's Gold: The Story of California's Mining Towns* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1970), illustration between 217-18, 231.
26. See Joseph W. Booth, "Diary, 1852-53, Northern Mines," Bancroft Library, CF 87; William H. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864: The Journal of William H. Brewer*, ed. by F. P. Farquhar (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 397, 400-402; S. W. Carnahan, "Three Letters Sent to John Ramage, March 17-Sept. 13, 1849," California Historical Society Library, Ms. 325; J. Lamson, "Diaries of J. Lamson, 1852-61," California Historical Society Library, Ms. 39; Newton C. Miller, "Letters to Elizabeth H. Miller: Gold Mining, Middle Yuba Canal and Water Co., 1852-1855," Bancroft Library, C-B 807; James B. Morrison, "Diary, Dec. 28, 1849-June 17, 1850," California Historical Society Library, Ms. 1513; John Wallace, "Letters, 1851-1856," California Historical Society Library, Ms. 2242; Thomas Starr King, *A Vacation Among the Sierras: Yosemite in 1860*, ed. by John A. Hussey (San Francisco: The Book Club of San Francisco, 1962), 13-14, 26.
27. Paul, *California Gold*, 150-157. See also Robert L. Kelly, *Gold vs. Grain: The Hydraulic Mining Controversy in California's Sacramento Valley* (Glendale, CA.: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1959), 34-45.
28. *Ibid.*, 15-30.
29. *Ibid.*, 134-35.
30. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864*, 455.
31. Eli B. Prater, "Letters, Jan. 24, 1882," Bancroft Library, 81/98 C.
32. The most complete account of forestry in California is C. Raymond Clar, *California Government and Forestry From Spanish Days Until the Creation of the Department of Natural Resources in 1927* (Sacramento: Division of Forestry, Dept. of Natural Resources, State of California, 1959), 65-160. See also R.W. Ayres, *History of Timber Management in the California National Forests, 1850-1937* (Washington, D.C.: Forest Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1958), 3-11; and E. R. Stanford, "A Short History of California Lumbering" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1924), 11-87. For contemporary accounts of the cutting of sequoia see H.S. Anable, "Journals, 1852-1854," 111-16; and Aubrey Drury, "The Livermore Family, Pioneers in California," Bancroft Library, 37-38.
33. For a survey of eleven popular histories of the northern Sierra, see David Beesley, "Whistle Punks and Steam Donkeys: Logging in Nevada County and the Northern Sierra During the Age of Animal and Steam Power," *Nevada County Historical Society Bulletin* 38, (Oct. 1984):25-30. See also Stanford, "A Short History of California Lumbering," 61-70; William Higby, "Correspondence, Letter to Levi Higby, Dec. 10, 1884," Bancroft Library, CB 627, which gives a good example of a small-scale mill operation; "Towle Brothers Company Records, 1861-1907, cover sheet, and Letter Head acting as a receipt listing products as of July 23, 1887," California Historical Society Library, Ms. 2182, which serves to illustrate a large-scale operation; and Clar, *California Government and Forestry*, 70-71, which quotes extensively from the 1868-69 "forestry report."
34. Constance Darrow Knowles, "A History of Lumbering in the Truckee Basin," Office Report, WPA Project # 9512373, for the Forest Survey Division, California Forest and Range Experiment Station, 1942, University of California, Berkeley, Forestry Library, 1-3.
35. Knowles, "A History of Lumbering in the Truckee Basin," 4-23.
36. Linnie Marsh Wolfe, ed., *John of the Mountains: The Unpublished Journals of John Muir* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1938), 85.
37. Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1871), I: 159-66.
38. Stanford, "A Short History of California Lumbering," 76-77; W. H. Hutchinson, *California Heritage: A History of Northern California Lumbering* (Diamond Match Co., no publication date, probably 1957-58), non-paginated, seventh and twenty-fifth page following cover; Donald J. Pisani, "The Polluted Truckee: A Study in Interstate Water Quality, 1870-1934," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 20, (Fall 1977): 151-56.
39. James P. Beckwourth, *The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth* (Minneapolis: Ross and Haines, Inc., 1856, reprinted 1965), 514-15.
40. Chester L. White, "Surmounting the Sierras: The Campaign for a Wagon Road," *Quarterly of the California Historical Society*, 7 (March 1928): 3-19.
41. William P. Blake, *Geological Report, Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean* (Washington, D.C.: War Department, 1857), 133-35; John A. Dreibelbis, "Map of Noble's Pass in Letter to un-named addressee, Feb. 7, 1854," Bancroft Library, 293; William H. Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803-1863* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1959, 1979), 286; Carl I. Wheat, *Mapping the Trans-Mississippi West, From the Pacific Railroad Surveys to the Onset of the Civil War, 1855-1860* (San Francisco: The Institute of Historical Cartography, 1960), 41-16; White, "Surmounting the Sierras," 3-4.
42. See Michael L. Smith, *Pacific Visions: California Scientists and the Environment, 1850-1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 28-33; Farquhar, *History of the Sierra Nevada*, 129-43.
43. James W. Hulse, "The California-Nevada Boundary: History of a Conflict, Part One," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 23 (Summer 1980): 87-109.
44. Hulse, "The California-Nevada Boundary:



- History of a Conflict, Part Two," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 23 (Summer 1980): 157-78.
15. For contemporary accounts of cattle effects, see J. Lamson, "Diaries, of J. Lamson, 1852-61," California Historical Society Library, Ms. 39, 570-74, and Wolfe, ed., *John of The Mountains*, 215. For a description of cattle being raised for meat, see Chas. D. Irons, ed. and compiler, *W. F. Edwards' Tourists' Guide and Directory of the Truckee Basin* (Truckee, California: W. F. Edwards, 1883), 76-77. For an account of dairy cattle transhumance in the Truckee area, see M. Nona McGlashan, "Heritage: Early Dairying," *Sierra Heritage* 2 (September 1982): 13-17.
  46. John Muir, *The Mountains of California* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1894, republished 1961), 93; Wolfe, ed., *John of the Mountains*, 215. For the most complete account of the role of the Basques who figured prominently in western stock raising, see W.A. Douglass and J. Bilbao, *Amerikannak: Basques in the New World* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1975). See also David Beesley, "Changing Land Use Patterns and Sheep Transhumance in the Northeastern Sierra Nevada, 1870-1980," in Otis Templar, ed., *Forum of the Association for Arid Lands Studies* (Lubbock, TX: International Center for Arid and Semi-Arid Land studies, Texas Tech University, 1985), 1: 3-8.
  47. Joseph LeConte, *A Journal of Ramblings Through the High Sierra By the University Excursion Party* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1930, first printed 1875), 73-79.
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27. *New York Post*, November 22, 1922; *Wall Street Journal*, January 23, 1923; Rose Scherini, "Executive Order 9066 and Italian Americans: The San Francisco Story," *California History* LXX (Winter 1991/92): 375. The cordial relationship between the United States government and Mussolini during the early interwar years is explored by Schmitz, *The United States and Fascist Italy*.
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45. "Decisive Battle in the Mediterranean," *L'Italo Americano* (January 17, 1941): 2.
46. "Prostrare L'Italia e gli Italiani," *L'Italo Americano* (January 31, 1941): 2.
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48. "Ieri, Oggi e Domani," *L'Italo Americano* (January 17, 1941): 2.
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- press objected to criticisms of its right to express its opinions regarding the war in Europe. The same issue of the paper carried a report that U.S. Senator Burton K. Wheeler had accused the War Department of maneuvering the nation toward war. *L'Italo Americano* (January 17, 1942): 2.
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51. "Ieri, Oggi e Domani," *L'Italo Americano* (July 4, 1941): 2.
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57. "12 More Listed in County and 69 in State," *Los Angeles Times* (February 1, 1942): 3; "Farm Colonies to Be Set Up for Evicted Enemy Nationals," *Los Angeles Times* (February 4, 1942): 6.
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59. Francis Beverly Biddle, "Americans of Italian Origin: An Address by the Honorable Francis Biddle Delivered at the Columbus Day Celebration, Carnegie Hall, New York, Monday, October 12, 1942," *United States Congressional Record* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1942): 11134 ff. See also Francis B. Biddle, *In Brief Authority*, (New York, 1962): 229. For contrasting views see Carlo Storza and Gaetana Salvemini, "Biddle's Order: Two Views on the Removal of the Enemy Alien Stigma for Italians," *Nation* 155 (November 7, 1942): 476-78, and "Concerning the Exemption of Italian Aliens from Alien Enemy Classification," *Interpreter Releases* 19 (October 20, 1942): 353-62.

# Parkman, "Interpreting the Past at Fort Ross State Historic Park," pp. 354-369.

- This is a revised version of a paper originally entitled, "A Fort By Any Other Name: Interpretation and Semantics at Colony Ross," presented as part of the symposium, "Colonial Russian Settlements in North America and the Kuriles," at the Annual Meeting of the Alaska Anthropological Association, March 1992, Fairbanks, Alaska. I thank Dr. Glenn Farris, Rangers Daniel Murley and William Walton, Robin Joy, and Caerleon Safford, all of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, John Middleton and Lyn Kalani of the Fort Ross Interpretive Association, Reverends Vladimir Derugin, Michael Oleska, and Alexander Krassovsky of the Russian Orthodox Church, Dr. Lydia Black of the University of Alaska, Dr. Kent Lightfoot and Antoinette Martinez of the University of California at Berkeley, Dr. Lynne Goldstein of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Dr. Alexei Istomin of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Moscow, Russia, Dr. Oleg Bychkov of Ethnographic Corporation, Irkutsk, Russia, Ty Dilliplane of Centerville, Massachusetts, Vana Lawson of Santa Rosa, California, Kathleen Smith of Walnut Creek, California, and Diane Askew of Sebastopol, California, for their assistance. Any errors, however, are the sole responsibility of the author.
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- For example, Charles Franklin Carter, translator, *A Visit to the Russians in 1828: An Episode from the Narrative of Auguste Bernard Duhaut-Cilly* (Silverado: Bohemian Grove, 1946), 9; Nicholas Del Cioppo, editor and translator, "Diary of Fr. Mariano Payeras: Travels of the Canon Fernandez De San Vincente to Ross" (Bancroft Library Manuscript Collection Ms. C-C118, 1979), 2, and "Report to Mariano G. Vallejo: Confidential Information Concerning the Ross Settlement, 1833" (Ms. on file at California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento, 1979), 6; Basil Dmytryshyn and E.A.P. Crownhart-Vaughan, editors and translators, *Colonial Russian America: Kurill T. Khlebnikov's Reports, 1817-1832* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1976), 106; Glenn Farris, translator, "Visit of the Ship *Apollon* to California in 1822-23" [Originally published in 1826 as *Voyage aux Colonies Russes de l'Amerique fait a bord du sloop de guerre l'Apollon, pendant les années 1821, 1822, et 1823*, by Achille Schabelski, L'imprimerie de N. Gretsck, St. Petersburg, Russia] (Ms. on file at California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento, n.d.), 8.
- Farris, "Visit of the Ship *Apollon*," 5.
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- Ibid.*, 137. It should be noted that in 1993 a strong wind collapsed 60 feet of the stockade's northeastern wall. Inspection of the fallen timbers revealed that most of their bases had been weakened by termite damage.
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# NOTES

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34. I should note that in recent years the staff of Fort Ross State Historic Park and the members of the Fort Ross Interpretive Association have made great progress in creating a more balanced and accurate interpretive program.
35. As an example of the problem that results from this false scenario, let me offer the following account. Several years ago, while at Fort Ross State Historic Park, I watched as a family with two young boys approached the reconstructed compound. Pausing just outside the main Sallyport, the boys picked up small sticks and immediately proceeded to engage in a mock gunfight. It appeared that the sight of the "fort" precipitated their response.
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